Religion and the Everyday Life of Manichaeans in Kellis

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Religion and the Everyday Life of Manichaeans in Kellis

Beyond Light and Darkness

By

Mattias Brand

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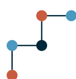

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To my parents,
with love and gratitude

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Acknowledgments

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Looking back on the last few years, I realize how the involvement of all these colleagues and friends made this a better book: thank you. Finally, I dedicate this book to my parents, with love and gratitude.

Mattias Brand
Zürich, July 2021

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Abbreviations and Translations

AA	Hegemonius, *Acts of Archelaus*, translation by Vermes, M. *Hegemonius Acta Archelai* (*the Acts of Archelaus*). Turnhout: Brepols, 2001.
BL	Berichtigungsliste der griechischen Papyrusurkunden aus Ägypten.
CDT1	Gardner, I., A. Alcock, and W.P. Funk, eds. *Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis: Volume 1*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999.
CDT2	Gardner, I., A. Alcock, and W.P. Funk, eds. *Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis: Volume 2*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2014.
CFM	Corpus Fontium Manichaeorum (CFM), series by Brepols publishers.
CMC	*Cologne Mani Codex*, publication in Koenen, L., and C. Römer, eds. *Der Kölner Mani-Kodex* (*über das Werden seines Leibes*), *Kritische Edition aufgrund der von A. Henrichs und L. Koenen besorgten Erstedition*. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1988. Additional readings in Römer, C. *Manis Frühe Missionsreisen nach der Kölner Manibiographie: Textkritischer Kommentar und Erläuterungen zu P. 121–P. 192 des Kölner Mani Kodex*. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1994. English translation of the larger part of the text by J.M. and S.N.C. Lieu is given in MTRE, 47–73.
Crum, CD	Crum W.E., ed. *A Coptic Dictionary*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1939.
GPK1	Worp, K.A., ed. *Greek Papyri from Kellis I*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1995.
Hom.	The Manichaean *Homilies*, published with an English translation by Pedersen, N.A., *Manichaean Homilies*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2006 in the CFM series. The Coptic text cited in the notes derives from this edition.
KAB	Bagnall, R.S., ed. *The Kellis Agricultural Account Book*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1997.
KLT1	Gardner, I., ed. *Kellis Literary Texts: Volume 1*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1996.
KLT2	Gardner, I., ed. *Kellis Literary Texts: Volume 2*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2007.
MTRE	Gardner, I., and S.N.C. Lieu, eds. *Manichaean Texts from the Roman Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
NHC	Nag Hammadi Codices.
SB	Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Aegypten.
TM	Trismegistos Database, http://www.trismegistos.org, last updated July 2018. Current team includes G. Baetens, Y. Broux, W. Clarysse, M. Depauw, N. Dogaer, T. Gheldof, and H. Verreth.
1 Keph.	The Berlin *Kephalaia*, known as the "Kephalaia of the Teacher." Pages 1–295 are translated in Gardner, I., ed. *The Kephalaia of the Teacher*. Leiden: Brill, 1995. Pages 291–440 are published and translated by Wolf-Peter Funk. Individual chapters are cited with a single number, while specific passages are cited with a chapter number followed by the

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manuscript page and line. The Coptic text cited in my notes derives from the critical editions by Ibscher and Schmidt, Böhlig, and Funk.

2 Keph. The Dublin *Kephalaia*, known as the "Kephalaia of the Wisdom my Lord Mani," was for a long time only published in facsimile editions. A recent project has led to the publication of a first volume containing a critical edition and English translation. Gardner, I., J. BeDuhn, and P.C. Dilley, eds. *The Chapters of the Wisdom of My Lord Mani*. Leiden: Brill, 2018.

1 PsB. First part of the Manichaean *Psalmbook*, currently only available in facsimile edition.

2 PsB. The Manichaean *Psalmbook*, published by Allberry, C.R.C., ed. *A Manichaean Psalm-Book. Part II*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1938. New editions of sections of the *Psalmbook* are published by Richter and Wurst in the CFM series. They are sometimes cited with a Psalm number followed by the specific manuscript pages.

For the Kellis texts I have deviated slightly from the abbreviations prescribed in the digital checklist of papyri, Founding Editors: John F. Oates and William H. Willis, *Checklist of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets,* http://papyri.info/docs/checklist. I have kept the T.Kellis II references in order to distinguish between texts on wood and papyrus (the T numbering for wooden boards was discontinued after the P.Kellis II volume). A list with all published documents from Kellis (found in the context of the Dakhleh Oasis Project) has been included in the appendix.

The Greek and Coptic text and its translations are from the editions listed among the abbreviations above. Where possible I have used Gardner's translation of the *Kephalaia*, from which I have removed all additional *sigla* for reasons of legibility. The square brackets in the Coptic and Greek texts indicate as lacuna in the text (with or without reconstructions of the text by the editors). As in the editions, sublinear dots indicate uncertain readings. All instances in which I have modified the translation, or used an alternative translation, are indicated in the notes.

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Religion and Everyday Groupness

> To my loved mother, greatly revered by me; her whom I love with all my heart, whose memory is planted in my thought every hour. I am looking forward to seeing you, my mother Maria, precious to me. It is I, your son Piene, who is greeting you; in the Lord, – greetings.
>
> This is my prayer every hour to the Father, the God of Truth, that he may preserve you healthy in your body, joyful in your soul, and firm in your spirit; for all the time that you will spend in this place. Also after this place, you may find life in the kingdom for eternity.
>
> PIENE TO HIS MOTHER MARIA[1]

Introduction

Papyrus letters seem to convey close and personal information, directly from the mouth (or the pen) of an ancient author. Piene's letter to his mother Maria accentuates a vivid sense of proximity and similarity. A boy, traveling far away from his mother, expresses his affection for her in a most elegant manner. How different is he from you and me?

Intimate as it may feel, this passage may also surprise us, generating feelings of cultural distance and alienation. For modern readers, Piene's words feel over the top: too explicit and affectionate. This affectionate tone is but one indication of the cultural distance between past and present. The passage derives from a fourth-century Coptic letter, written on papyrus and found in a recently excavated desert village in the Dakhleh Oasis – a world very different from our own. It reminds us that what *we* expect to read, after sixteen hundred years, is

1 ⲧⲁⲙⲟ ⲙ̄ⲙⲉⲣⲓⲧ` ⲉⲧⲧⲁⲓ̈ⲁⲓ̈ⲧ` ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲧ` ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ ⲧⲉϯⲙⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲥ ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲁϩⲏⲧ` ⲧⲏⲣϥ ⲉⲣⲉ ⲡⲉⲥⲣ̄ⲡⲙⲉⲩⲉ ϫⲁⲓ̈ⲧ` ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲁⲙⲉⲩⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲟ ⲛⲓⲙ` ⲉⲓ̈ϭⲁϣⲧ` ⲁ̣ⲃⲁⲗ ϫⲉⲓ̈ⲛⲁⲛⲉⲩ ⲁⲣⲟ ⲧⲁⲙⲉⲩ ⲉⲧⲁⲓ̈ ⲛ̄[ⲧⲟⲧ] ⲙⲁⲣⲓⲁ ⲁⲛⲁⲕ ⲡⲉϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲡⲓⲉⲛⲉ ⲡ̣[ⲉ]ⲧϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲁ̣ⲣⲟ ϩⲛ̄ ⲡϫⲁⲓⲥ ⲭⲁⲓⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲟ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲡⲉⲓ̈ ⲡⲉ ⲡⲁϣⲗⲏⲗ ϣⲁ ⲡⲓⲱⲧ` ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲙⲉ ⲧ̣ⲁ̣[ⲣ]ⲉϥⲣⲁⲓ̈ⲥ ⲁⲣⲟ ⲉⲣⲉⲟⲩ[ⲁ]ϫ` ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲉ̣[ⲥ]ⲱ̣ⲙ̣ⲁ ⲉⲣⲉ̣ⲣⲉϣⲉ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧⲉⲯⲩⲭⲏ ⲉ̣[ⲣ]ⲉⲧⲁϫ̣[ⲣⲁⲓⲧ` ϩⲛ̄] ⲡⲉⲡⲛ̄ⲁ̣ ⲙ̄ⲡⲟⲩⲁⲓϣ ⲧⲏ[ⲣ]ϥ̄ ⲉⲧ̣ⲉⲣ̣[ⲁ]ⲉ̣ϥ̣ ⲛ̄ⲡⲓⲙ[ⲁ] ⲙⲛ̄ⲥⲁ ⲡⲓ̣ⲙⲁ ⲁⲛ [ⲧ]ⲉ̣ϭⲓⲛⲉ ⲙ̣̄ⲡ̣ⲱⲛϩ̄ ϩⲛ̄ [ⲧ]ⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲣ̄ⲣⲟ̣ ϣⲁⲁ[ⲛ]ⲏ̣ϩⲉ P.Kellis V Copt. 29.1–13 (Piene to Maria) found in House 3, room 6.

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not the same as what Piene's mother expected to hear from him.[2] Instead of offering direct insight into his emotions, the message is mediated by the rules and customs of ancient letter writing. The presence (or absence) of a scribe has to be taken into account, as do the epistolary conventions of the era, and the question of his mother's literacy. If she was illiterate, as were most women of her time, she may have asked a relative or neighbor to read her son's letter to her. So much for an intimate letter between mother and son.

As one reads further in Piene's letter, the religiously marked language stands out. Who is he praying to when he addresses the "Father, the God of Truth"? Coptic letters from the same period – of which there are only a few – use similar polite wishes and prayer formulas, but not these specific words. In fact, the "Father, the God of Truth" is only once referred to in fourth-century letters outside the oasis. The phrase is, however, common in Manichaean cosmological and liturgical texts. Along with other indicators, it places Piene and his mother in a Manichaean context. Piene's father, Makarios, addresses his wife and her family as "the children of the living race."[3] Again, this is an uncommon phrase with parallels in Manichaean literature. Why was invoking a Manichaean transempirical entity known from a long and complex cosmological narrative that originated in third-century Mesopotamia relevant in the Egyptian desert? How much of this tradition can we safely assume was present in the author's context? Should we consider these Manichaean phrases as casual or strategic references to a deeply felt religious identity? If so, how did this religious group identity affect the lives of Piene and his brother? Did they play with the neighbors' children? Did their mother attend birthday parties in the village, or is it more probable that they secluded themselves within a semiclosed religious group?

Seemingly casual references to transempirical beings and the use of extraordinary self-designators open up another world within and beyond the context of everyday life in the Dakhleh Oasis. Sometimes explicitly religious in tone, these short references in personal letters provide insight into the daily lives of individuals in a fourth-century village. The letters were part of a stunning cache of new papyri found in several Roman houses in one of the larger villages of the Dakhleh Oasis: Kellis (modern Ismant el-Kharab in the western desert of Egypt, roughly 350 km from the Nile). These papyri have been made accessible by members of the Dakhleh Oasis Project, the most important for

2 On contextual factors, such as rhetorical structures and epistolary conventions, see R.S. Bagnall, *Reading Papyri, Writing Ancient History* (London: Routledge, 1995). On the role of emotions in ancient letters, see W. Clarysse, "Emotions in Greek Private Papyrus Letters," *Ancient Society* 47 (2017): 63–86.

3 ⲛ̄ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧ̣ⲣⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲛϩ̄ P.Kellis v Copt. 22.5 (Makarios to Maria) found in the same House 3, room 6.

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our purpose being those discovered during Colin Hope's excavation of Ismant el-Kharab. A final synthesized publication has yet to appear, but a series of field reports has presented the main finds.[4] This includes seven volumes with critical editions of the extant papyri and ostraca.[5] In these texts, we encounter individuals and families we call "Manichaeans," a name they never used themselves. Manichaeans were made famous by the polemics of religious and imperial authorities in Late Antiquity. They were *the* religious *other*, perceived as an imminent threat to the Roman state and to an orthodox Christian way of life. It was commonplace to describe them as crazy and perverted, and to label them as a fifth column of the Persian archenemy. Twentieth-century finds that included authentic Manichaean texts in several ancient languages have amended heresiological perspectives, even though these texts most often dealt only with theological or liturgical issues. Some liturgical documents were found at Kellis as well, thereby confirming the Manichaean connection. The most striking discovery in the village, however, were the personal letters and business accounts of ordinary Manichaean individuals and families, which offer an unprecedented perspective on the Manichaean religion in everyday life.[6]

In fact, the Manichaean letters from Kellis are the *only* extant evidence of this type from the Roman era found so far, with the exception of three Greek letters, whose Manichaean background became clear after the Kellis finds.[7]

4 Unfortunately, I have not yet seen C.A. Hope and G.E. Bowen, eds., *Kellis: A Roman-Period Village in Egypt's Dakhleh Oasis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022). The field reports initially appeared in the Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities (JSSEA) and continued in the Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology (BACE).

5 K.A. Worp, ed., *Greek Papyri from Kellis I* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1995); I. Gardner, ed., *Kellis Literary Texts: Volume 1* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1996); R.S. Bagnall, ed., *The Kellis Agricultural Account Book* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1997); I. Gardner, A. Alcock, and W.P. Funk, eds., *Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis: Volume 1* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999); K.A. Worp, ed., *Greek Ostraka from Kellis* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2004); I. Gardner, ed., *Kellis Literary Texts: Volume 2* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2007); I. Gardner, A. Alcock, and W.P. Funk, eds., *Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis: Volume 2* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2014). The editions will be cited with the abbreviations listed above.

6 The most recent reflections by the editor of the papyri are found in I. Gardner, "The Coptic and Syriac, Christian and Manichaean Texts Recovered from Ismant Al-Kharab: An Update on New Discoveries and Significant Research Since First Publication," in *Oasis Papers 9*, ed. G.E. Bowen and C.A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2019), 395–401; I. Gardner, *The Founder of Manichaeism: Rethinking the Life of Mani* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 95–105.

7 P.Oxy. XXXI 2603, LXXIII 4965, and P.Harr. 107. A few fragmentary personal letters from Manichaeans are known from eighth/ninth-century Turfan. A. Benkato, "Sogdian Letter Fragments in Manichaean Script," *Studia Iranica* 45 (2016): 197–220; W. Sundermann, "Eine re-edition zweier manichäisch-soghdischer Briefe," in *Iranian Languages and Texts from Iran and Turan: Ronald E. Emmerick Memorial Volume*, ed. M. Macuch, M. Maggi, and W. Sundermann (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2007), 403–21; M.Y. Yoshida, "Manichaean

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The letters from Kellis shed light on the nitty-gritty details and contested practicalities of lived religion. Mostly, these new finds supplement existing reconstructions of Manichaeism, adding the distinct flavor of a local Egyptian setting, but at times, they strongly challenge perspectives from prescriptive theological texts and cosmological tractates. This challenging aspect is of pivotal importance to the field of Manichaean Studies, as the papyri from Kellis include the oldest datable Manichaean documents, firmly placed in the second half of the fourth century CE. They give us a glimpse into the everyday life of Manichaeans at a crucial period in the development of the Manichaean religion, before – and contemporaneous with – the systematization of their doctrine and its diffusion throughout the ancient world.[8]

Religion and the Everyday Life of Manichaeans in Kellis will take a two-pronged approach to these papyri. The first is a cultural historical approach to the new texts and the daily practices of their authors. With a theoretical framework of *Everyday Groupness*, I will explore where and how ordinary Manichaeans practiced their religion in their daily lives, something that could hardly be addressed in previous academic studies published before the Kellis discoveries. Building on modern sociological theories (on identity and everyday practices, individual religious agency, and group-formation) and historical approaches (microhistory), this book places ordinary individuals at its heart, without omitting the textual or prescriptive perspectives of religious specialists.

The second approach uses the Manichaeans of Kellis to put an academic grand narrative about religious transformation to the test. It locates the Manichaeans at the heart of the late antique rise of disembedded, group-specific religions by zooming in on the everyday construction of a group identity, interactions with outsiders, and the existence of a translocal network of texts, practices, and ideas. In Kellis, we see a version of Manichaeism built on a network structure of itinerant elect and family units. These Manichaean families lived in close proximity to Christians and devotees of Egyptian gods, such as

Sogdian Letters Discovered in Bazaklik," *École pratique des hautes études, section des sciences religieuses* 109 (2000): 233–36.

8 Although the documents are older than the Medinet Madi documents and predate the Iranian, Latin, Greek and Chinese documents sometimes by centuries, it remains possible to argue that other texts reflect even earlier textual traditions. This is in particularly true for some of the texts that have been ascribed to Mani, like the cosmological fragments of the *Šābuhragān*. The Medinet Madi codices have been radiocarbon dated to the end of the fourth-, beginning of the fifth century. J.D. BeDuhn and G. Hodgins, "The Date of the Manichaean Codices from Medinet Madi, and Its Significance," in *Manichaeism East and West*, ed. S.N.C. Lieu (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 10–28.

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the local sphinx-shaped Tutu. They were involved in village affairs, connected to the Roman administration, engaged in astrological practice, and read the famous works of Classical Greek authors. On a microhistorical scale, therefore, the situation in Kellis reflects the religious dynamics of the Roman Empire at large, illustrating the mechanisms of religious change: instances where a distinct religious group seems to emerge, as well as situations in which this conceptual frame was entirely absent. The occasional nature of articulate religious self-identification and behavior within everyday life offers a strong incentive against uncritically accepting late antique totalizing religious discourse (of the *all-or-nothing* type) as a reflection of everyday life.[9] It also discourages overarching academic narratives that emphasize religious conflict and demarcation of group-specific religions in Late Antiquity.

The discovery of Manichaean documents in Kellis facilitates this double approach: theological and liturgical documents speak to religious practices, while the personal letters and business accounts reveal *where* and *how* such Manichaean practices and ideas affected everyday life.

Introducing Manichaeism

Manichaeism came into being in third-century Mesopotamia, and it spread over the Sasanian Empire into the Roman Empire and China, where it continued to exist for centuries. The story of its rise and decline spans a long period of time and a wide variety of geographical and cultural settings. The academic study of these sources started in the eighteenth century, though mainly through the lens of the anti-Manichaean polemics of Early Christian authors. New watershed discoveries in the twentieth century shifted the focus from the heresiology of patristic writers to the Iranian context of Mani and his scriptures. As many of these texts were written in various Iranian languages, they gave the impression that Manichaeism was in essence an Iranian religion, presumably a reform movement within Zoroastrianism.[10] Inevitably, however, scholars with knowledge of Syriac Christianity began to notice similarities

9 On the totalizing fiction of narratives and labels, see M.R. Somers, "The Narrative Constitution of Identity: A Relational and Network Approach," *Theory and Society* 23 (1994): 610 and 624.

10 Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 27. Geo Widengren, for example, repeatedly argued for a strong relationship between Manichaean cosmology and Zurvanism. G. Widengren, *Mani und der Manichäismus* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1961), 48–52. The existence and status of Zurvanism is, however, contested. A.F. de Jong, *Traditions of the Magi: Zoroastrianism in Greek and Latin Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 63–68, 330–38. More

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between Mani's teachings and those of Marcion and Bardaisan, which led to an emphasis on the Christian nature of Manichaeism.[11] Interpretative transitions also followed manuscript discoveries at Turfan, Dunhuang, Medinet Madi, and Ismant el-Kharab. These finds fueled the study of Manichaeism throughout the twentieth century, both by philologists of various languages (including Middle Persian, Parthian, Sogdian, Bactrian, Turkish, and Chinese) and by historians of religion (whose expertise has tended to include knowledge of Greek, Latin, Coptic, and Syriac). In recent years, the center of gravity of Manichaean Studies has shifted away from Iranian interpretations (although excellent text editions are still produced), as many scholars now consider Manichaeism a trajectory of ancient Christianity.

Named after the founder Mani (known as the Apostle of Light, born on April 14, 216 CE), the term Manichaean carries a mixture of ancient and modern derogatory connotations. Greek heresiological texts often played with the Greek version of the original Syriac title Manichaios, which probably meant "my living vessel," to associate it with μανείς: foolishness.[12] The modern label Manichaeism is not as derogatory as its ancient equivalents, but it runs the risk of concealing the fragmentary, diverse, and random nature of most of our knowledge. As Jason BeDuhn, one of the leading voices in Manichaean Studies, points out, by hallowing it with a modern "-ism," the Manichaean tradition has been "comfortably nested in a web of interpretation that locates Manichaeism in its relation to other, better-known dualisms, asceticisms, gnosticisms, mysticisms, and syncretisms."[13] The academic interpretations and classifications of what we call Manichaeism, therefore, deserve our attention as we aim to understand the social dynamics of the Manichaeans of Kellis.

studies stressing the Iranian background of Manichaeism are listed in J.C. Reeves, *Jewish Lore in Manichaean Cosmogony* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1992), 5n5.

11 F.C. Burkitt, *The Religion of the Manichees* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1925), 71–86; C.W. Mitchell, ed., *S. Ephraim's Prose Refutations of Mani, Marcion and Bardaisan* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1912–21).

12 J.K. Coyle, "Foreign and Insane: Labelling Manichaeism in the Roman Empire," in *Manichaeism and Its Legacy* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 3–24; J. Tubach and M. Zakeri, "Mani's Name," in *Augustine and Manichaeism in the Latin West*, ed. J. van Oort and O. Wermelinger (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 272–86 considers the original title to mean something like "the living, or hidden, vessel." Shapira proposes to render "The Living Self." D. Shapira, "Manichaios, *Jywndg Gryw* and Other Manichaean Terms and Titles," in *Irano-Judaica IV*, ed. S. Shaked and A. Netzer (Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi Press, 1999), 122–50; Gardner, *The Founder of Manichaeism*, 31–36.

13 J.D. BeDuhn, *The Manichaean Body in Discipline and Ritual* (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), x.

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Most Manichaean texts derive from one of two main clusters: the oldest documents stem from fourth- and fifth-century Egypt (Medinet Madi and Kellis), while the majority of later texts were found at Turfan and Dunhuang (modern China), and date back to the eighth–eleventh centuries.[14] Apart from these main clusters, authentic Manichaean texts were found in Latin (Tebessa, Algeria, 1918), Greek (*Cologne Mani Codex*, bought in Egypt by the University of Cologne in the 1960s), Syriac (mostly in fragments or in citations by Christian authors), and Chinese.[15] These texts supplement descriptions of Manichaeism in heresiological texts, which range from Theodor Bar Khoni's summary of the Manichaean myth, to Ibn al-Nadīm's list of Mani's *Epistles*, to Augustine's nasty remarks about Manichaean elect farting out supernatural Light.[16] With the twentieth-century discoveries in hand, it is possible to correct polemical portrayals, understand more of the internal logic of Manichaean discourse, and fill in some of the gaps in our reconstructions of Manichaeism.[17]

The Manichaean myth centered on the fate of the Living Soul, who was ensnared in the material world. This Living Soul originated from the Father of

14 W. Sundermann, "Manichaean Literature in Iranian Languages," in *The Literature of Pre-Islamic Iran*, ed. R.E. Emmerick and M. Macuch (London: I.B. Tauris, 2008), 197–265. Manichaeism flourished during this period and was became the state religion in a Uighur kingdom between 762 and 840 CE. In 840 CE the empire was annihilated, but the Manichaean presence continued until in the tenth century it was largely been surpassed by Buddhism. W. Sundermann, "Manichaeism on the Silk Road: Its Rise, Flourishing and Decay," in *Between Rome and China: History, Religion and Material Culture of the Silk Road*, ed. S.N.C. Lieu and G.B. Mikkelsen (Turnhout: Brepols, 2016), 84–87. For the Medinet Madi documents, see C. Schmidt and H.J. Polotsky, *Ein Mani-Fund in Ägypten: Orinalschriften des Mani und seiner Schüler* (Sonderausgabe aus den Sitzungsberichten der preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-Hist. Klasse 1933.1; Berlin: Akademie der Wissenschaften, in Kommission bei W. de Gruyter, 1933). A full discussion of the discovery can be found in J.M. Robinson, *The Manichaean Codices of Medinet Madi* (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2013). Only two sections of a historical codex (presumably the *Acts*) have been published. N.A. Pedersen, "A Manichaean Historical Text," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 119 (1997): 193–201.

15 S.N.C. Lieu, *Manichaeism in Central Asia and China* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 49–54 on the discovery of these texts and their earliest translations. For recent discoveries and literature, see M. Xiaohe, "Remains of the Religion of Light in Xiapu (霞浦) County, Fujian Province," in *Mani in Dublin*, ed. S.G. Richter, C. Horton, and K. Ohlhafer (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 228–58.

16 Reports on breathing, farting, and burping out Light are polemically employed in Augustine, *Contra Faust.* 2.5, 6.6, 20.13, *Conf.* 3.10.18. It appears as a real topic of soteriological discourse in CMC 81. R. Lane Fox, *Augustine: Conversions to Confessions* (New York: Basic Books, 2015), 121.

17 Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 25–45 on the impact of these discoveries on the study of Manichaeism. An English translation of some of the Middle Persian, Parthian, Sogdian and Turkic texts is found in H.J. Klimkeit, *Gnosis at the Silk Road* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1993).

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Greatness, who through a series of emanations surrounded himself by Light beings acting on his behalf (he himself is praised as hidden and exalted in some of the hymns found in Kellis, such as T.Kellis II Copt. 1 and P.Kellis II Gr. 92, while P.Kellis VI Gr. 98 contains a prayer praising all the emanations). The First Man, one of the beings from the first emanation, descended to wage war against the realm of Darkness. He was captured, stripped of his five sons (his armor, also perceived as transempirical Light beings), and trapped in Darkness. Light beings from the second emanation came to the rescue: they awakened him by reminding him of his true destiny and origin (1 Keph. 72 and 85). In the process, they collaborated with the Third Messenger and other Light beings from the third emanation, and fashioned the universe in such a way that it – despite its material nature (made from Darkness) – worked toward the liberation of the last elements of Light.[18] This cosmological narrative was told with variations, but Manichaeans summarized their worldview as the "two principles" and the "three times," which referred to the worlds of Light and Darkness and the three temporal stages of the cosmological drama: the original state of separation between Light and Darkness, the present moment of mixture, and the restoration of Light at the end of times.[19] While there can be no doubt that both notions had roots in Zoroastrian cosmology, the story also resonated with Christian notions about the cosmos.[20] The enchained elements of Light received various names: they were called the Living Soul, the

18 On this positive view of the cosmos, see L. Koenen, "How Dualistic Is Mani's Dualism?," in *Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis – Atti 2*, ed. L. Cirillo (Cozenza: Marra Editore, 1990), 13–24.

19 I. Colditz, "The Abstract of a Religion or: What Is Manichaeism?," in *Mani in Dublin*, ed. S.G. Richter, C. Horton, and K. Ohlhafer (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 52–56. The three times and two principles are discussed, for example, in CMC 132.11–13, Hom. 7.11–15, 2 PsB. 9.8–11, 11.30–1, 1 Keph. 5.27–8, 15.19–20, 16.20–21, 73.28, and more fully in 1 Keph. 55.16–57.32. N.A. Pedersen, *Studies in the Sermon on the Great War* (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1996), 172–76.

20 Bermejo-Rubio points to structural parallels between the Christian son of God and the Manichaean Primal Man. F. Bermejo-Rubio, "Primal Man, Son of God: From Explicit to Implicit Christian Elements in Manichaeism," in *Mani in Dublin*, ed. S.G. Richter, C. Horton, and K. Ohlhafer (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 34–46. Cf. A. Böhlig, "The New Testament and the Concept of the Manichaean Myth," in *The New Testament and Gnosis: Essays in Honour of Robert McL. Wilson*, ed. A.H.B. Logan and A.J.M. Wedderburn (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1983), 98–9. Similar parallels exist, however, with the Zoroastrian myth of the original conflict. J.D. BeDuhn, "The Leap of the Soul," in *Il manicheismo: nuove prospettive della ricerca*, ed. A. van Tongerloo and L. Cirillo (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), 22–25; M. Heuser, "The Manichaean Myth According to Coptic Sources," in *Studies in Manichaean Literature and Art*, ed. M. Heuser and H.J. Klimkeit (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 3–108; M. Hutter, "Manichaeism in Iran," in *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Zoroastrianism*, ed. M. Stausberg, Y.S.-D. Vevaina, and A. Tessmann (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015), 477–90.

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Cross of Light, and were also identified as the Suffering Jesus (*jesus patibilis,* lit. vulnerable Jesus): "Jesus that hangs to the tree, Youth, son of the dew, milk of all trees, sweetness of the fruits."[21]

Theologically, Manichaean texts relate a strongly dualistic worldview in which transempirical kingdoms of Light and Darkness stood against each other in a primordial cosmological battle: a conflict that defined all of reality. Humankind could participate in this battle through revealed knowledge (*gnosis*) and by following the rules and regulations of the Manichaean church, either as members of the elect or as hearers (in Western sources often called catechumens). The reciprocal relationship between these two classes of Manichaeans stood at the core of their religious life. The ascetic-living elect needed the financial and material support of the hearers, because they had to keep strict behavioral rules. By following these rules, the elect could purify themselves and liberate the transempirical elements of Light trapped inside defiling matter (the Living Soul, 1 Keph. 79). Simple acts of agriculture, sexual immorality, or wine consumption could hurt the Living Soul (1 Keph. 80). Therefore, catechumens were expected to bring food for a daily ritual meal as alms gifts. Manichaean texts from both the East and West attest to the widespread practice and alimentary logic of this meal, which was considered to contribute not only to the liberation of Light, but also to individual salvation.[22] In the Kellis papyri, we witness the catechumens and elect in action, allowing us to examine how Manichaean regulations were put into practice.

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21 [ⲓ̣ⲏ̣ⲥ̣ ⲉⲧⲁϣⲉ ⲁⲡϣⲉ: [ⲡ]ⲗⲓⲗⲟⲩ ⲡϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲓ̈ⲱⲧⲉ: [ⲡ]ⲉⲣⲱⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ϣⲏⲛ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ· [ⲡϩⲗ] ⲁϭ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲕⲁⲣⲡⲟⲥ. 2 PsB. 155.24–27. Cf. 2 PsB. 121.32. A full discussion of this Jesus figure is found in the published edition of E. Rose's 1937 Marburg dissertation. *Die manichäische Christologie* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1979), 89–116. A key question in subsequent research has been to what extent the Manichaeans identified the various Jesus figures with each other. Majella Franzmann considers the vulnerable Jesus as a not fully developed side-figure, equivalent to the Living while simultaneously arguing for the essential unity of the other Manichaean Jesus figures. *Jesus in the Manichaean Writings* (London: T&T Clark, 2003), 131–139. Jason BeDuhn points out that we see "the figure of Jesus expanding and contracting in its roles," depending on the cultural environment. "The Manichaean Jesus," in *Alternative Christs*, ed. O. Hammer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 53. Despite such cultural specific variation, Jesus remains a key figure associated with the imprisoned supernatural Light (for example in the Chinese Manichaean *Hymnscroll*, 252–4).

22 H.C. Puech, "Liturgie et pratiques rituelles dans le manichéisme (Collège de France, 1952–1972)," in *Sur le manichéisme et autres essais* (Paris: Flammarion, 1979), 235–394; BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*; N.A. Pedersen, "Holy Meals and Eucharist in Manichaean Sources: Their Relation to Christian Traditions," in *The Eucharist – Its Origins and Contexts*, ed. D. Hellholm and D. Sänger (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 1267–97.

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The diffusion of the Manichaean tradition is often associated with the central role of books. Mani was remembered as the author of his own set of sacred scriptures (canonized as either a Pentateuch or Heptateuch), which included the *Living Gospel*, the *Treasure of Life*, the *Treatise* (*Pragmateia*), the *Book of Mysteries*, the *Book of Giants*, the *Epistles*, and the *Psalms and Prayers*.[23] With these books, he was said to have restored Jesus's wisdom (2 PsB. 224, 12.31). Not only did he write his words of wisdom; he also depicted them in his *Picturebook*.[24] Unfortunately, few of these canonical works survived, apart from brief citations in other ancient texts. Although Manichaeans claimed that Mani was a prolific writer, modern scholars depend largely on texts written by his disciples. Among the works of the first generations of disciples are collections of Mani's sayings and lectures, which were subsequently circulated in sermons, hagiographical stories, and question-and-answer literature (known as *Kephalaia*: chapters). The two *Kephalaia* books are of importance because of their systematized character and sheer size (both volumes held about five hundred pages, slightly less than the Manichaean *Psalmbook*, but still constituting the second largest papyrus codex of the ancient world).[25] Manichaean kephalaia were known as a genre as early as the 340s CE, and several Iranian texts contain traces of hagiographical homilies that correspond

23 For a systematical interpretation, see N.J. Baker-Brian, *Manichaeism: An Ancient Faith Rediscovered* (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 67. The various lists differ. Compare the following with the list in the introduction of the *Kephalaia*: The *Gospel*, the *Treasure of Life*, the *Pragmateia*, the *Book of the Mysteries*, the *Book on the Giants*, the *Epistles*, the *Psalms* and the *Prayers*, his *Image* (Hom. 25.2–5). *The Living Gospel*, the *Treasure of Life*, the *Pragmateia*, the *Book of Mysteries*, the *Writing of the Giants* (last three listed as one single gift), the *Epistles* (1 Keph 148, 355.4–25). The *Great Gospel*, the *Treasure of Life* (*Thesaurus*), *Pragmateia*, *Book of Mysteries, Book of Giants, Book of his letters* (2 PsB. 46.21–31, on page 47 it includes the two *Psalms and his Prayers*). M. Krause, "Die Aussagen von Sarakoton-Psalm 2 (Man. Ps. Book 139,52–140,17) über die heiligen Schrifter der Manichäer," in *Gnosisforschung und Religionsgeschichte: Festschrift für Kurt Rudolph zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. H. Preißler and H. Seiwert (Marburg: Diagonal-Verlsag, 1994), 136–41. The concept of a canon is suitable only in so far it designates lists of Mani's writings that carried a certain authority. N.A. Pedersen et al., *The Old Testament in Manichaean Tradition: The Sources in Syriac, Greek, Coptic, Middle Persian, Parthian, Sogdian, New Persian, and Arabic* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), xii.

24 Z. Gulácsi, *Mani's Pictures: The Didactic Images of the Manichaeans from Sasanian Mesopotamia to Uygur Central Asia and Tang-Ming China* (Leiden: Brill, 2015). In general on textuality in Ancient Christianities, see G.G. Stroumsa, *The Scriptural Universe of Ancient Christianity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016). A comparative perspective on canon formation and religious networks is pursued in P. Dilley, "Religious Intercrossing in Late Antique Eurasia: Loss, Corruption, and Canon Formation," *Journal of World History* 24, no. 1 (2013): 25–70.

25 T. Pettipiece, *Pentadic Redaction in the Manichaean Kephalaia* (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

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to Coptic kephalaia.[26] If the kephalaia texts date back to the late third or early fourth century, they may have belonged to an earlier body of work that was collected and redacted into the two volumes found at Medinet Madi: the *Kephalaia of the Teacher* and the *Kephalaia of the Wisdom of my Lord Mani*. Other Coptic texts found at Medinet Madi included the *Psalmbook*, *Synaxeis* codex, the historical *Acts* codex, a codex with *Homilies*, and Mani's *Epistles*.[27] These theological and cosmological codices have defined our understanding of Egyptian Manichaeism, and they remain pivotal in any examination of Manichaean belief and practice.

Manichaeism spread over the entire ancient world. Manichaean historical narratives inform us about the heroes of the first generation of missionaries: Mani's successor Sisinnios, Mar Adda and Pattek, who traveled to the Eastern Roman Empire, and Mar Ammo, who preached in Parthia and Central Asia. While it is difficult to establish the historicity of such accounts, the wide diffusion of Manichaean texts suggests groundbreaking success from the third century onwards.[28] Manichaeism flourished in Central Asia, where it even became

26 On the early date of the *Kephalaia*, see I. Gardner, "Towards an Understanding of Mani's Religious Development and the Archaeology of Manichaean Identity," in *Religion and Retributive Logic: Essays in Honour of Professor Garry W. Trompf*, ed. C.M. Cusack and C.H. Hartney (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 148n4. The *Kephalaia* is mentioned in Hom. 18.6 and the *Acta Archelai*. On the early fourth-century date of the latter, see S.N.C. Lieu, *Manichaeism in Mesopotamia and the Roman East* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 135–40. The Iranian "*Kephalaia*" are generally of late date. They correspond to the Coptic texts in content and enumerative structure, but the two texts are never in agreement more closely. Sundermann, "Manichaean Literature in Iranian Languages," 224–27; W. Sundermann, "Iranische Kephalaiatexte?" in *Studia Manichaica II*, ed. G. Wießner and H.J. Klimkeit (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1992), 305–18.

27 I. Gardner, ed., *The Kephalaia of the Teacher* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), xxiv calls it an "evolving and fluid discourse." See also, I. Gardner, "Kephalaia," in *Encyclopædia Iranica*, ed. E. Yarshater (2018). Available at http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/kephalaia (accessed on 20 December 2020). The parallels between the Chinese *Traité* and the *Kephalaia* point toward Iranian *Kephalaia* traditions. Lieu, *Manichaeism in Central Asia and China*, 59–75. Funk argues that a single author or compiler was responsible for the final Medinet Madi versions. W.P. Funk, "The Reconstruction of the Manichaean *Kephalaia*," in *Emerging from Darkness: Studies in the Recovery of Manichaean Sources*, ed. P. Mirecki, J. BeDuhn (Leiden, 1997), 154. Most recently, the reflections on the forthcoming edition of the Dublin *Kephalaia* (2 Keph.) have offered new thoughts on the evolving collection of *Kephalaia* traditions in relation to the coherence of a Manichaean tradition. P. Dilley, "Mani's Wisdom at the Court of the Persian Kings: The Genre and Context of the Chester Beatty Kephalaia," in *Mani at the Court of the Persian Kings*, ed. I. Gardner, J.D. BeDuhn, and P. Dilley (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 15–51; J.D. BeDuhn, "Parallels between Coptic and Iranian Kephalaia: Goundesh and the King of Touran," in *Mani at the Court of the Persian Kings*, ed. I. Gardner, J.D. BeDuhn, and P. Dilley (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 52–74.

28 Pivotal are the historical studies by W. Sundermann, "Studien zur kirchengeschichtlichen Literatur der iranischen Manichäer I," *Altorientalische Forschungen* 13, no. 1 (1986):

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the state religion of the Uighurs in the eighth and ninth century. In China, the veneration of "Mani the Buddha of Light" seems to have continued for centuries. A UNESCO-sponsored project looked into a temple near Quanzhou (Zayton, in the Fujian province), and even found indications of the continuation of a highly Buddhaized Manichaeism in recent religious practices of some South-Chinese villagers.[29] Despite its initial success, Manichaeism gradually disappeared from the Roman Empire during the fifth and sixth centuries, due to a combination of persecution, historical and social change, and internal differentiation. It already becomes more difficult to trace Manichaeans in Egypt during the period after the village of Kellis was abandoned.

Kellis and Quanzhou are two villages at the extreme ends of the ancient world, divided by centuries of history and a vast geographical distance. Including them both within the history of Manichaeism underlines the pivotal questions behind this book: What is Manichae*ism*? How was a Manichaean life lived by ordinary people in their specific localities?

Manichaeans and the Transformation of Religion in Late Antiquity

Religion and the Everyday Life of Manichaeans in Kellis will show how the Kellis papyri challenge one prevailing model of religious change in Late Antiquity. It questions the characterization of Manichaeism as a "total religion" with sectarian characteristics, and instead focuses on the flexibility of local religious practice and the haphazard visibility of religious identities in daily life; the interactions beyond dualistic representations of light and darkness.[30]

40–92; W. Sundermann, "Studien zur kirchengeschichtlichen Literatur der iranischen Manichäer II," *Altorientalische Forschungen* 13, no. 2 (1986): 239–317; W. Sundermann, "Studien zur kirchengeschichtlichen Literatur der iranischen Manichäer III," *Altorientalische Forschungen* 14, no. 1 (1987): 47–107. More recent are S.N.C. Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China*, 2nd ed. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992); Lieu, *Manichaeism in Mesopotamia*; I. Gardner and S.N.C. Lieu, "From Narmouthis (Medinet Madi) to Kellis (Ismant el-Kharab): Manichaean Documents from Roman Egypt," *Journal of Roman Studies* 86 (1996): 146–69. Various theories about the introduction of Manichaeism into Egypt are discussed in the second chapter of J.A. van den Berg, *Biblical Argument in Manichaean Missionary Practice* (Leiden: Brill, 2010).

29 This was even announced as the discovery of a "living Mani cult" in M. Franzmann, I. Gardner, and S.N.C. Lieu, "A Living Mani Cult in the Twenty-First Century," *Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa* 41 (2005): vii–xi. See the contributions in the final report, S.N.C. Lieu, ed., *Medieval Christian and Manichaean Remains from Quanzhou* (*Zayton*) (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012).

30 The phrase "total religion," usually designating religion(s) that exert hegemonic claims over all other cultural spheres, is used in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 9.

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Religious change in Late Antiquity is frequently characterized as a fundamental transition from localized community religions to disembedded, group-specific religions. Jan Assmann uses the phrases *primary* and *secondary* religion to designate this transition, and Jonathan Z. Smith speaks of *locative* and *utopian* religion to discern fundamentally different orientations.[31] In most of these binary classifications, ancient religions are the primary mode of religiosity, organized within pre-existing social formations such as the family or the city. The newer types of religions that arose – or became more widespread – during Late Antiquity were less strongly tied to local environments, frequently more mobile, and they presented universal and utopian claims aimed at the renewal and transformation of the entire cosmos (sometimes even in strong opposition to the societal and political status quo).[32] Recent elaborations have suggested that "*utopianism* and *locativism* are better seen as two tendencies" within religions, much like the tension between modern *globalization* of religion and its *localization* in a wide variety of contexts.[33] Assmann's designation of this new type of religion as "secondary" focusses on the emergence of a true-false doctrinal distinction as a defining principle in the crystallization of distinct religious groups.[34] Belief in a black and white truth paved the way for

31 J. Assmann, *The Price of Monotheism* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2009); J.Z. Smith, *Map Is Not Territory* (Leiden: Brill, 1978), xiii–xiv; J.Z. Smith, "Native Cults in the Hellenistic Period," *History of Religions* 11, no. 2 (1971): 236–49. Another binary classification is Bruce Lincoln's *ancient* and *postancient* religion. B. Lincoln, "Epilogue," in *Religions of the Ancient World: A Guide*, ed. S.I. Johnston (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004), 665.

32 Roman religion has been described as *embedded* because "the whole of the political and constitutional system was conducted within an elaborate network of religious ceremonial and regulation." M. Beard, J. North, and S. Price, *Religions of Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 43; For a critique on this model see B. Nongbri, "Dislodging 'Embedded' Religion: A Brief Note on a Scholarly Trope," *Numen* 55, no. 4 (2008): 440–60. More recent studies on Greco-Roman religion share a critical stance toward the "polis-religion" model that has dominated the field since the 1980s. J. Kindt, "Polis Religion – A Critical Appreciation," *Kernos* 22 (2009): 9–34; J. Kindt, "Personal Religion: A Productive Category for the Study of Ancient Greek Religion?," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 135 (2015): 35–50; J. Rüpke, "Individuals and Networks," in *Panthée: Religious Transformations in the Graeco-Roman Empire*, ed. L. Bricault and C. Bonnet (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 261–77.

33 G. Woolf, "Empires, Diasporas and the Emergence of Religions," in *Christianity in the Second Century: Themes and Developments*, ed. J.C. Paget and J. Lieu (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 29. Literature related to the globalisation and localization of religion in the ancient world is found in G.S. Gasparro, "The Globalisation and Localisation of Religion: From Hellenism to Late Antiquity. Assessing a Category in the History of Religions," in *Hellenisation, Empire and Globalisation: Lessons from Antiquity*, ed. L.H. Martin and P. Pachis (Thessaloniki: Vanias, 2004), 41–83.

34 Assmann, *The Price of Monotheism*, 1–2.

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religiously demarcated groups with their totalizing claims. Becoming part of these new religions was perceived as an individual choice of conversion, making membership optional, but also directly tied to group-specific behavioral expectations.[35]

Manichaeism seems to fit the bill perfectly. Manichaean historical and hagiographical texts present a highly self-conscious image of the Manichaean church as a distinct social entity, superior to all preceding regional religions. A fifth-century Coptic text, also known in a Middle Persian version, systematizes this sentiment of superiority with a list of ten ways in which the Manichaean "church" surpassed all other "churches" (ⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ). In this text, Manichaeans praise their founder Mani: "you have opened our eyes, that this church surpasses by its primacy over the first [or: previous] churches."[36] They locate the source of this superiority in Mani's accumulation of wisdom, the strength of the Manichaean church under persecution, and its universal appeal (1 Keph. 151). Specifically, the text claims:

> The writings and the wisdom and the revelations and the parables and the psalms of all the first churches have been collected in every place. They have come down to my [Mani's] church. They have added to the wisdom that I have revealed, the way water might add to water and become many waters. Again, this also is the way that the ancient books have added to my writings, and have become great wisdom.
>
> 1 Keph. 151 372.11–18

35 A.F. de Jong, "Waar het vuur niet dooft: Joodse en Christelijke gemeenschappen in het Sasanidenrijk," *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 70, no. 3 (2016): 177; Woolf, "Empires, Diasporas and the Emergence of Religions," 30–38; J. North, "The Development of Religious Pluralism," in *The Jews among Pagans and Christians*, ed. J. Lieu, J. North, and T. Rajak (London: Routledge, 1992), 178.

36 [..] ⲁⲕⲧⲟⲩϊⲉⲧⲛ̄ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ϫⲉ ϯⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲟⲩ̣[ⲁ]ⲧ̣ⲃ̣ⲉ̣ ⲛϩ̣[ⲟⲩⲁϊⲧ]ⲥ ⲡⲁⲣⲁ ⲛ̄ϣⲁⲣ̄ⲡ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ 1 Keph. 151, 375.11–12, translation by Gardner in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 91. The most complete version of this list is found in Coptic (1 Keph. 151), but it has also been transmitted in a Middle Persian version, which suggests that an earlier version goes back to the third century. D. Durkin-Meisterernst, "Wie persisch war der Manichäismus in Ägypten? Wie ägyptisch ist er geworden?," in *Ägypten und sein Umfeld in der Spätantike*, ed. F. Feder and A. Lohwasser (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2013), 217. For the Middle Persian version, see the translation and discussion in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 109–10; S.N.C. Lieu, "'My Church Is Superior …' Mani's Missionary Statement in Coptic and Middle Persian," in *Coptica – Gnostica – Manichaica: Mélanges offerts à Wolf-Peter Funk*, ed. P.H. Poirier and L. Painchaud (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), 519–27; M. Brand, "Ten Steps to Superiority: Manichaean Historical Reasoning and the Formation of a New Religion," in *Claiming History in Religious Conflicts*, ed. A. *Brändli* and K. Heyden (Basel: Schwabe Verlag, 2021), 111–141.

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This self-representation of the Manichaean church as a social entity organized around religious wisdom in books and in competition with other "churches" is telling. It shows how Manichaeans conceptualized themselves within a system of distinctly organized communities in particular parts of the world, and were guided by the written revelations of founder figures.[37] The Manichaean usage of terms such as "ⲥⲁⲩϩⲥ̄" (community), "ⲇⲟⲅⲙⲁ" (sect), and "ⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ" (church) reflects a self-understanding that corresponds with emerging group-specific religions in Late Antiquity.[38]

About fifty years ago, Peter Brown argued that to "favour the Manichees meant favouring a group. This group had a distinctive and complex structure. Because of this structure, the Manichaean group impinged on the society around it in a distinctive way; and this structure, in turn exposed it to distinctive pressures from its Roman environment."[39] As Brown continues to assert, Manichaeism's success was based on the organizational structure with communities of hearers who were mostly "indistinguishable from their

37 In 2 Keph. 422.28–423.12, the same perspective was applied to other religions. J.D. BeDuhn, "Mani and the Crystallization of the Concept of 'Religion' in Third Century Iran," in *Mani at the Court of the Persian Kings*, ed. I. Gardner, J.D. BeDuhn, and P. Dilley (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 268. Although he was never mentioned, the Syriac Christian author Tatian feeds into the same milieu, making similar innovative steps as Mani. J. Lössl, "The Religious Innovator Tatian: A Precursor of Mani in Syrian Christianity?," in *Manichaeism and Early Christianity*, ed. J. van Oort (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 1–23.

38 In fact, BeDuhn argues that they were among the first to think of themselves – and others – in terms of religiously demarcated groups. There are, however, good reasons to consider the Zoroastrian self-representation as an earlier example of specifically religious group identifications. Kerdir's inscription explicitly designates the groups of conquered people in religious terms, and I am not convinced by Nongbri's argument about the broader semantic meaning of the Middle Persian "dēn". Nongbri, *Before Religion*, 69–70. BeDuhn is more accommodating toward Kerdir's inscription, but states that "Mani did more than refer to or describe this plurality; he made it the subject of a theory". BeDuhn, "Crystallization of the Concept of 'Religion'," 266. Cf. K. Rezania, "'Religion' in Late Antique Zoroastrianism and Manichaeism: Developing a Term in Counterpoint," *Entangled Religions* 11, no. 1 (2020): 71–74; N.J. Baker-Brian, "A New Religion? The Emergence of Manichaeism in Late Antiquity," in *A Companion to Religion in Late Antiquity*, ed. J. Lössl and N.J. Baker-Brian (Malden: Wiley Blackwell, 2018), 319–343; C. Markschies, "Globalized History of Religions in Late Antiquity? The Problem of Comparative Studies and the Example of Manichaeism," in *Comparative Studies in the Humanities*, ed. G.G. Stroumsa (Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 2018), 173–194. On the waning of the negative evaluation of "novelty," see A.K. Petersen, "Between Old and New: The Problem of Acculturation Illustrated by the Early Christian Use of the Phoenix Motif," in *Jerusalem, Alexandria, Rome: Studies in Ancient Cultural Interaction in Honour of A. Hilhorst*, ed. F.G. Martínez and G.P. Luttikhuizen (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 147–64.

39 P. Brown, "The Diffusion of Manichaeism in the Roman Empire," *Journal of Roman Studies* 59, no. 1 (1969): 99.

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environment" and sheltered the "vagrant" and "studiously ill-kempt" elect living ascetic lives.[40] Much has changed in the study of Manichaeans in the last fifty years, but the emphasis on the group structure of Manichaeism has remained. The presence of a Manichaean teacher in the Kellis documents (e.g. P.Kellis V Copt. 20) has been interpreted in reference to previous accounts of a pyramid-shaped church hierarchy, leading the editors to suggest, "it would appear that the Kellis community had a direct link to (conceivably) the foremost Manichaean leader in Egypt at the time."[41] Reflecting on Augustine's life and the new sources from Kellis, Peter Brown continues to stress the strong group identity of Manichaeans: their deep sense of intimate friendship and the "intense experience of bonding in one of the most starkly countercultural groups in the Latin West."[42] Manichaeism's group structure, others argue, influenced Augustine's sense of "elitism," which remained influential even after his conversion to Nicene Christianity.[43] To become Manichaean, according to these reconstructions, was to become part of a well-defined and demanding religious group: a religion *par excellence*.[44]

40 Brown, "The Diffusion of Manichaeism," 99.

41 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 75.

42 Interestingly, Brown already described Manichaeism as a strong current of new spiritual Christianity in his biography of Augustine, P. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo* (London: Faber & Faber, 1967), 43–44; P. Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 159; P. Brown, *Treasure in Heaven: The Holy Poor in Early Christianity* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2016), 43–50.

43 J.D. BeDuhn, *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma 1: Conversion and Apostasy, 373–388 C.E.* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 35. On a related note, Johannes van Oort summarizes how Manichaeism "became a feared competitor of the official Christian Church both in the Roman Empire and elsewhere. Its firm organization guaranteed a strong unity. Thanks to its organization and a system of teachings that could easily be accommodated, Manichaeism was already within Greco-Roman antiquity a success". J. van Oort, "Mani and Manichaeism: A General Introduction," in *Mani and Augustine* (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 9.

44 In fact, Jonathan Z. Smith has called Manichaeism "perhaps the first, self-conscious 'world' religion," a label that has found wide following. J.Z. Smith, "A Matter of Class: Taxonomies of Religion," *Harvard Theological Review* 89 (1996): 387–403. Reprinted in J.Z. Smith, *Relating Religion: Essays in the Study of Religion* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004). Wilfred Cantwell Smith credited Mani with "deliberately establishing a religion." W.C. Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion: A New Approach to the Religious Traditions of Mankind*. Reprint. ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991 [1962]), 93; and Guy Stroumsa described the Cologne Mani Codex as offering "a glimpse at the very passage from sect to world religion." G.G. Stroumsa, *Hidden Wisdom: Esoteric Traditions and the Roots of Christian Mysticism* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 64.

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Classifying Manichaeans

Before I highlight some of the problems with this group-based approach to Manichaeism, two sensitive academic classifications deserve attention. The first process of classification involves speaking of Manichaeism as a religion; a growing number of contemporary scholars question the concept of *religion* for antiquity.[45] The second process of classification involves the inclusion of Manichaeans in the broad category of ancient Christianity (sometimes spelled in the plural: Christianities). The limited – but not unsubstantial – evidence for Christian institutions in Kellis, as well as the heavily Christian tone of some of the personal letters, has sparked characterizations of the Manichaeans of Kellis as "*the* Christians in the Dakhleh Oasis."[46] This designation, in turn, has affected scholarly understanding of Manichaeism as a religion. Should we understand Manichaeism as a type of Christianity *or* as a new religion?[47] My take on the classification of Manichaeism is substantive and pragmatic: I believe that we should treat Manichaeism as a religion, and that it should be distinguished (but not separated) from ancient Christianity.

The concept of religion has been subject to deconstruction and controversy over the last couple of decades, to the extent that some specialists in the study of religion would rather abandon the concept than continue to use it as an explanatory category, especially for premodern societies.[48] Religion, these scholars argue, is conceptually tied to the early modern world and tainted by imperialism, colonialism, and European polemics between Protestants and

45 Russell McCutcheon, for example, states that, "by means of such classifications, we may very well be actively presenting back to ourselves the taxonomies that help to establish our own contingent and inevitably provincial social world as if their components were self-evident, natural, universal, and necessary." R.T. McCutcheon, *The Discipline of Religion: Structure, Meaning, Rhetoric* (London: Routledge, 2003), 255.

46 Lieu, "Self-Identity of the Manichaeans," 224 (his emphasis).

47 Brent Nongbri argues that the close affiliation between Manichaeans and Christians implies that it is difficult to regard Manichaeism a distinct religion. Nongbri, *Before Religion*, 66–72. His argument hinges on the purported Christian self-identification of Manichaeans, but he concludes that "groups of Manichaeans were different entities in different contexts to different observers" (72).

48 T. Fitzgerald, "A Critique of 'Religion' as a Cross-Cultural Category," *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 9, no. 2 (1997): 91–110. An overview of the literature is given in R.T. McCutcheon, "The Category 'Religion' in Recent Publications: A Critical Survey," *Numen* 42, no. 3 (1995): 284–309; R.T. McCutcheon, "The Category 'Religion' in Recent Publications: Twenty Years Later," *Numen* 62, no. 1 (2015): 119–41; R. Orsi, "The 'So-Called History' of the Study of Religion," *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 20 (2008): 134–38.

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Catholics.[49] Without delving into the ethical and ontological debates, I believe that we can embrace historiographical reflection *and* retain an open concept of religion. When I describe Manichaeism as a religion, I mean to refer to a bundle of social practices, beliefs, experiences, narratives, and discourses that assume the existence of transempirical – or supernatural – entities, worlds, and/or processes.[50] This stipulative definition leaves space to theorize about historical differences, for example, concerning the types of organization and levels of religious groupness. It also prioritizes social practices over individual beliefs, without losing sight of the fact that particular beliefs about transempirical beings is a differentiating factor. Some of these *bundles* of practices coalesce into religious groups or religions – networks of interrelated practices that are grouped together into social complexes.[51] The demarcation of what gets to be grouped together, and what is excluded, is determined by the social and religious dynamics between religious texts, leaders, and practitioners. With this broad substantive definition, I hope to highlight ancient conceptualizations analogous – but not directly equivalent – to the modern concept of religion.[52] This requires reflection on the difference between ancient self-understanding and modern classification, as Kevin Schilbrack argues, "the retentionist hypothesis is that even if a culture does not have the concept of religion, the connections that constitute the cultural pattern are indigenous and not imposed by the use of the external label."[53] In other words, there

49 Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion;* R.F. Campany, "On the Very Idea of Religions (in the Modern West and in Early Medieval China)," *History of Religions* 42, no. 4 (2003): 287–319; C.A. Barton and D. Boyarin, *Imagine No Religion: How Modern Abstractions Hide Ancient Realities* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2016).

50 Slightly deviating from the definition given by M.A. Davidsen, "Theo Van Baaren's Systematic Science of Religion Revisited: The Current Crisis in Dutch Study of Religion and a Way Out," *NTT Journal for Theology and the Study of Religion* 74, no. 3 (2020): 234. A different – but comparable – definition is outlined in J. Rüpke, "Religious Agency, Identity, and Communication: Reflections on History and Theory of Religion," *Religion* 45, no. 3 (2015): 344–66.

51 C. Smith, *Religion: What It Is, How It Works, and Why It Matters* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017), 26; M. Riesebrodt, *The Promise of Salvation: A Theory of Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), xii defines religions as concrete systems of practices that are related to superhuman powers.

52 R.F. Campany, "'Religious' as a Category: A Comparative Case Study," *Numen* 65, no. 4 (2018): 335–6; M.L. Satlow, "Disappearing Categories: Using Categories in the Study of Religion" *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* (2005) 17: 289.

53 K. Schilbrack, *Philosophy and the Study of Religions: A Manifesto* (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2014), 95; K. Schilbrack, "Religions: Are There Any," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 78, no. 4 (2010): 1112–38; K. Schilbrack, "A Realist Social Ontology of Religion," *Religion* 47, no. 2 (2017): 161–78.

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are valuable lessons to be learned by reflecting on the concept of religion in European colonial history, but this does not undermine the existence of what we now call religion across cultures.[54]

The characterization of Manichaeism as a religion, controversial among a small number of scholars of religion, is less contested among historians of Manichaeism than its classification as a type of ancient Christianity. In its starkest form, the distinction is between scholars who consider Manichaeism to be a new religion built on various previous traditions, and those who regard it as a type of ancient Christianity that was expelled, rejected, and externalized within the heresiological process of crystallizing Christianity. Johannes van Oort, one of the leading voices in the latter stream of scholarship, describes Manichaeism as originating from a Jewish-Christian that in the West was crystalized into Gnostic-Manichaean Christianity alongside and in conversation with its "Catholic" counterpart, as "frères ennemis."[55]

Classifying Manichaeism as a type of Christianity is a scholarly strategy; classification does not tell one what *is* the same, but only what *counts as* the same. It implies an abstract decision about sameness (which features of a religion make it *the same* as another religion?) and difference (since everything is somehow different, which differences count?). Conflicts over classification belong to the heart of the study of religion, not only because of the definitional question outlined above, but also because of everyday social and legal struggles about inclusion and exclusion.[56] The recognition of the evident *othering* of Manichaeans by heresiologists has led to a cautious scholarly approach, much

54 Or, as Jonathan Z. Smith put it in *Imagining Religion*, "from Babylon to Jonestown". K. Schilbrack, "Imagining Religion in Antiquity: A How To," in *Theorizing "Religion" in Antiquity*, ed. N. Roubekas (Sheffield: Equinox, 2019), 63; W. Hanegraaff, "Reconstructing 'Religion' from the Bottom Up," *Numen* 63, no. 5–6 (2016): 576–605.

55 J. van Oort, "The Emergence of Gnostic-Manichaean Christianity as a Case of Religious Identity in the Making," in *Religious Identity and the Problem of Historical Foundation*, ed. W. Otten, J. Frishman and G. Rouwhorst (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 285; J. van Oort, "The Paraclete Mani as the Apostle of Jesus Christ and the Origins of a New Church," in *The Apostolic Age in Patristic Thought*, ed. A. Hilhorst (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 139–57. I agree with Albert the Jong that the shift in interpretation away from Iranian interpretations, should have led to profound reflection on academic classification strategies, but, "[t]his debate has, unfortunately, never taken place." A.F. de Jong, "A Quodam Persa Exstiterunt: Re-Orienting Manichaean Origins," in *Empsychoi Logoi: Religious Innovations in Antiquity*, ed. A. Houtman, A. de Jong and M. Misset-van de Weg (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 90; A.F. de Jong, "The Cologne Mani Codex and the Life of Zarathushtra," in *Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians: Religious Dynamics in a Sasanian Context*, ed. G. Herman (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2014), 130.

56 A.B. Seligman and R.P. Weller, *How Things Count as the Same: Memory, Mimesis, and Metaphor* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 6–8.

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attuned to ancient Manichaean self-identifications.[57] Strengthened by the postcolonial desire to uncover the voices of marginalized people and groups, recent research has highlighted the competition behind claims on a Christian identity. As Nils Arne Pedersen states:

> The paramount concern is to avoid a terminology that tears apart groups and ideas which in a historical perspective had not only a common source, but also a continuous, interconnected history in which they remained related: each defined itself in relation to the other and each professed to represent the true version of what its opponent also claimed to be.[58]

Indeed, the Manichaean documents from Kellis contain strikingly Christian features that should be analyzed in light of the gradual development of ancient Christian traditions. Some letters of the elect, as we will see, allude to biblical parables, and their psalms praise Jesus, but is this sameness enough to call Manichaeans Christians?

At this point, a brief comparison can be drawn with the study of ancient gnostics. While their claims on secret knowledge (*gnosis*) were fiercely rejected by Christian heresiologists, some individuals gnostics considered themselves to be proper Christians (the self-identification criterion to classification), and they were part and parcel of some of the earliest Christian communities (the genealogical approach to classification).[59] Scholars like Michael A. Williams and Karen King have reflected on the continuation of heresiological discourse in modern scholarship and rejected binary divisions resembling the orthodoxy and heresy divide. Instead, they shifted to classifications based on ancient self-identification or more elaborate academic typologies of *Gnosticism* (frequently highlighting cosmological sameness). In this perspective, gnostics became "alternative" Christians whose voices were written out of history by

57 Baker-Brian states that, "bubbling away beneath the surface of Manichaean studies lies the continuation of some of these heresiological characterisations of Mani and his religion." Baker-Brian, *Manichaeism*, 7. Likewise, Richard Lim argues that modern scholars "owe the sense of a distinctive Manichaean identity to the works of catholic/orthodox Christian writers". R. Lim, "The *Nomen Manichaeorum* and Its Uses in Late Antiquity," in *Heresy and Identity in Late Antiquity*, ed. E. Iricinschi and H.M. Zellentin (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 147.

58 N.A. Pedersen, *Demonstrative Proof in Defence of God: A Study of Titus of Bostra's Contra Manichaeos: The Work's Sources, Aims and Relation to Its Contemporary Theology* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 11.

59 D. Brakke, *The Gnostics: Myth, Ritual and Diversity in Early Christianity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 1–28; C. Markschies and E. Thomassen eds., *Valentinianism: New Studies* (Leiden: Brill, 2020).

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other Christian polemicists.[60] Interestingly, the emphasis on self-identification led April DeConick to argue in another direction, namely that "making the gnostic into a Christian only imposes another grand narrative on the early Christians, one which domesticates gnostic movements," and conceals their "countercultural" attitude.[61] What if the same is true for the way we classify the Manichaeans? Following these twenty-first century re-evaluations of essentialist classifications, we can redirect attention to ancient *processes* of identity formation and the *heuristic* application of labels and categories to shed light on both sameness and difference.

Classifying Manichaeans within the category of ancient Christianity runs the risk of creating a false friend. There is still a lot that is unknown about what Manichaeans in Kellis practiced and believed. Lumping them with other Christians obviates the development of a fine-grained academic classification and obscures open questions: did the Manichaeans make use of Kellis's third-century church buildings? How did they relate to priests and bishops of the regional Christian church? Did they regard these non-Manichaean Christians as belonging to *the same* religion? Would the Manichaean families have thought about themselves as *similar* to the village's Christians? In light of these questions, it remains imperative to recognize that Manichaeans not only claimed continuity with the message of Jesus, but also claimed novelty and superiority (for example, in 1 Keph. 151). Any classification should take into account the fact that they venerated a new founder figure, read an additional set of scriptures, and established distinct institutional structures, not unlike the difficult-to-classify Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.[62] Apart

60 M.A. Williams, *Rethinking "Gnosticism": An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); K.L. King, *What Is Gnosticism?* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003); The most helpful overview of classification history is D.M. Burns, "Gnosticism, Gnostics, and Gnosis," in *The Gnostic World*, ed. G.W. Trompf, G.B. Mikkelsen, and J. Johnston (London: Routledge, 2019), 9–25.

61 A.D. DeConick, "The Countercultural Gnostic: Turning the World Upside Down and inside Out," *Gnosis: Journal of Gnostic Studies* 1 (2016): 7–35.

62 Despite his attention for the Christian features of Manichaeism, a more nuanced position was already argued by A. Böhlig, "Neue Kephalaia des Mani," in *Mysterion und Wahrheit* (Leiden: Brill, 1968), 262–65. On the classification of the LDS Church, see the reflections of J. Shipps, *Sojourner in the Promised Land: Forty Years among the Mormons* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 335–357. John Turner categorizes Mormon Christianity as a new *genus* of the *family* Christianity rather than a new world religion. *The Mormon Jesus* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2016), 1–18. Some scholars and insiders, on the other hand, prefer to classify it as a distinct world religion. L. Wiles, "Mormonism and the World Religions Discourse: Contesting the Boundaries of Comparative Religion's Prevailing Taxonomy," *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 27, no. 1 (2015): 1–30. For the ancient separation – and academic distinction – of Judaism

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from these organizational features, Manichaean texts and practices show the extensive engagement with – and influence of – Zoroastrian, Buddhist, and Jain traditions, to the extent that these elements cannot be understood as a veneer layer of missionary adaptations only.[63] This warrants a nuanced understanding of Manichaeism as a multifaceted phenomenon, to be distinguished – but not separated[64] – from Christian traditions. Invoking a modern metaphor, Baker-Brian characterizes the position of Manichaeans as "somewhere within what is the equivalent of a religiously-style Venn diagram, where claims to an identity – such as those made by Mani himself as an 'Apostle of Jesus Christ' – overlap other claims and are dependent upon being read within the context of a specific theological setting."[65] This Venn diagram also leaves space for in-depth classificatory argumentations based on a genealogical approach (highlighting Mani's upbringing in a Christian baptist community), a self-identification approach (based on Manichaean self-understanding), or a typological approach (focused on the central role of Jesus, revealed gnosis, and biblical exegesis).[66]

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and Christianity, see A.Y. Reed and A.H. Becker eds., *The Ways That Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003).

63 The discussion about transmigration is a good example of how the field of Manichaean Studies has to navigate essentialism and notions of cultural influence. I. Gardner, "Some Comments on Mani and Indian Religions According to the Coptic *Kephalaia*," in *Il manicheismo: nuove prospettive della richerca*, ed. L. Cirillo and A. van Tongerloo (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), 123–36; M. Deeg and I. Gardner, "Indian Influence on Mani Reconsidered: The Case of Jainism," *International Journal of Jaina Studies* 4–6 (2011): 158–86; A. Henrichs, "'Thou Shalt Not Kill a Tree': Greek, Manichaean and Indian Tales," *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 16 (1979): 99. Response in W. Sundermann, "Mani, India, and the Manichaean Religion," *South Asian Studies* 2, no. 1 (1986): 16. The dual context of Manichaeism is best seen in BeDuhn's examination of Christian and Zoroastrian ritual meals as models for the Manichaean food rituals. J.D. BeDuhn, "Eucharist or Yasna? Antecedents of the Manichaean Food Ritual," in *Studia Manichaica IV*, ed. R.E. Emmerick, W. Sundermann, and P. Zieme (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000), 14–36. While previous scholarship has approached this in terms of the distinction between Mani's hypothetical "Urform" and its countless cultural adaptations, I would stress the ever-changing nature of religion. *Contra* H.H. Schaeder, "Urform und Fortbildungen des manichäischen Systems," in *Vorträge der Bibliothek Warburg*, ed. F. Saxl (Leipzig: Teubner, 1927), 65–157.

64 For the difference between "distinguishing" and "separating" in classificatory action, see K. Schilbrack, "A Metaphysics for the Study of Religion: A Critical Reading of Russell McCutcheon," *Critical Research on Religion* 8, no. 1 (2020): 92–93.

65 Baker-Brian, *Manichaeism*, 17–18.

66 A fuller examination of Christianizing interpretations and the history of Manichaean Studies remains imperative, but falls, unfortunately, outside the scope of this chapter. For an example of the typological approach, see Pedersen's statement that the centrality of Jesus as a Manichaean savior figure, "must already undermine the understanding of Manichaeism as a 'new religion'," and "on this basis certain scholars including myself

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The consensus understanding of Manichaeism as a world religion that arose within a late antique transition toward distinct group-specific religions stands in contrast to emerging scholarly critique of group-based models in the study of religion. Pivotal in this regard is Rogers Brubaker's warning against *groupism*, defined as "the tendency to take discrete, sharply differentiated, internally homogeneous and externally bounded groups as basic constituents of social life, chief protagonists of social conflicts, and fundamental units of social analysis."[67] While Brubaker's warning was directed at scholars working on ethnicity and nationalism, the same tendency is visible in the study of late antique religions. David Brakke has questioned academic models that presuppose bounded groups: "In the laudable effort to emphasize the diversity of early Christian groups and movements, we tend to create stable 'name brands,' [such as Gnostics, Montanists, Marcionites, Encratites] which interact and compete with each other like so many brands of breakfast cereal on a grocery store shelf."[68] Stanley Stowers has also criticized the unreflective use of the term *community* for the study of ancient Christianity, which he traces back to German Romanticism. The existence of highly cohesive communities with commonality in belief and practice standing behind Christian and Manichaean literature has to be proven, rather than uncritically assumed. A groupism perspective, based on heresiological classifications with "neatly

have been willing to regard Manichaeism as a part of ancient Christianity". Pedersen, *Demonstrative Proof*, 9. Cf. Franzmann, *Jesus in the Manichaean Writings*, 2–6. This crucial role of Jesus in Manichaean soteriology and eschatology, highlighted by Rose, *Die manichäische Christologie*, 132–138, 140–153, is not to be dismissed, but can hardly be used as the single criterion for an academic classification. Within a genealogical approach, the CMC is often presented as definite proof of Mani's *Christian* identity, but there has been very little eye for the "obvious apologetic devices" of this text. I concur with Gardner's statement that, "as Manichaeologists we have not been critical enough" about these narratives (although Gardner's arrows are aimed at synchronicity between Mani's revelation, his mission, and the Shapur's rise to power). Gardner, *The Founder of Manichaeism*, 38 and 64. Cf. J.H. Han, "The Baptist Followers of Mani: Reframing the Cologne Mani Codex," *Numen* 66, no. 1 (2019): 243–70; S.C. Mimouni, *Les baptistes du Codex manichéen de Cologne sont-ils des elkasaïtes?* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2020), 149–268, 337–350. I am not convinced by his dismissal of Luttikhuizen on 279–280, 290–3. Cf. G.P. Luttikhuizen, "Waren Manis Täufer Elchasaiten?," in *Inkulturation des Christentums im Sasanidenreich*, ed. A. Mustafa, J. Tubach and G.S. Vashalomidze (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2007), 21–29. The *Jewish*-Christian elements in the CMC are highlighted in J. van Oort, "Jewish Elements in the Cologne Mani Codex," *Journal of Early Christian History* 9, no. 3 (2019): 85–96.

67 R. Brubaker, "Ethnicity without Groups," *Archives européennes de sociologie* 43, no. 2 (2002): 164.

68 Brakke, *The Gnostics*, 9.

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differentiated groups built around texts," is in itself a discursive construction.[69] The authors of Christian and Manichaean texts may have wished for such communities to come into existence, but it is more likely that readers, copyists, interpreters, and writers formed their own social networks that only partially reflected other religious group styles.[70] What is required, therefore, is a more "flat methodology," in which the conceptual leap from text to community is reexamined by focusing on the discursive identity formation in theological texts, the role of scribes, and the lingering presence of modern academic presuppositions.[71] The Manichaean papyri from Kellis offer an opportunity to develop this approach and re-think the groupism behind the current prevailing models of religious change in Late Antiquity.

Theoretical Framework: Everyday Groupness

This book's theoretical framework is characterized by what I will call *Everyday Groupness*, a critical scholarly approach to everyday life undergirded by current debates in religious studies and sociology.[72] It draws upon William H. Sewell Jr.'s characterization of "worlds of meaning" as "contradictory, loosely integrated, contested, mutable, and highly permeable."[73] Following this critical post-Parsian view of culture, scholars of lived religion focus on the

69 S.K. Stowers, "The Concept of 'Community' and the History of Early Christianity," *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 23 (2011): 238–56. Citation from J. Rüpke, "The Role of Texts in Processes of Religious Grouping during the Principate," *Religion in the Roman Empire* 2 (2016): 172.

70 Stowers treats the "religion of literate cultural producers" as a distinct mode in ancient Mediterranean religion, to be distinguished from the "religion of everyday social exchange" that entailed plant and animal offerings. S.K. Stowers, "The Religion of Plant and Animal Offerings Versus the Religion of Meanings, Essences, and Textual Mysteries," in *Ancient Mediterranean Sacrifice*, ed. J.W. Knust and Z. Varhelyi (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 35–56.

71 D. Ullucci, "Competition without Groups: Maintaining a Flat Methodology," *Journal of Religious Competition in Antiquity* 1 (2019): 1–17, building on Bruno Latour's "flat methodology".

72 The specific phrase and the approach are strongly influenced by the work of Éric Rebillard, for example in his *Christians and their Many Identities in Late Antiquity, North Africa, 200–450 CE* (London: Cornell University Press, 2012).

73 W.H. Sewell, "The Concept(s) of Culture," in *Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture*, ed. V.E. Bonnell and L. Hunt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 53. Inconsistency and ancient religion are explored in H.S. Versnel, *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman Religion: Ter Unus. Isis, Dionysos, Hermes. Three Studies in Henotheism* (Leiden: Brill, 1990), 1–35.

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everyday practices of ordinary individuals, detecting and analyzing religious groups when they become important within individual choices. It is, however, not enough to point to individual diversity, or the contradictory complexity of everyday life. A more sophisticated theoretical framework should allow us to move from typological characterizations of religion to the nitty-gritty of everyday religious behavior – and back. Practice theories provide us with tools to do this: they focus on individual agency without positing or rejecting religious groups as essentialist constructions. They point in the direction of the everyday practices that constitute a religion by asking: where and when was a Manichaean group identity formed? When and how was it relevant enough to be acted upon?

The Quotidian Turn: Toward Everyday Life

The conventional focus on Manichaeism as a religious system has for a long time prioritized the theological and cosmological texts of the elite, while the everyday life of ordinary Manichaeans remained unexplored. Most Manichaean sources primarily represent the perspective(s) of religious elites with access to enough resources to produce manuscripts that stood the test of time.[74] BeDuhn, while reflecting on his study of the cosmology, anthropology, and ritual of the Manichaean meal, has hinted at the omission of everyday life. In retrospect, he argues that we should focus on

> how other religions actually lay out in practice, what they actually mean to their living adherents, how they are integrated into daily lives, how their ideals are modified by local conditions and expediencies – in short, the human reality of a lived religion.[75]

Reading the Kellis letters from the perspective of the *quotidian turn* has the potential to bring this unexplored side of Manichaeism to the fore, and offer valuable insights into the world of ordinary Manichaeans, who, as we will see,

74 With terms like "institutional" and "elite," I refer to the wealth standing behind written documents and elaborate literary works. Wealthier individuals are more frequently visible in papyri because their societal role and property often involved interactions put into writing. Bagnall, *Reading Papyri, Writing Ancient History*, 14–15. The conventional focus on institutionalized religion is visible in the various introductions to Manichaeism. M. Tardieu, *Manichaeism*, trans. P.A. Mirecki (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2008), which hardly treats Manichaeism as a historical and social movement (with the exception of a section on the church hierarchy). Baker-Brian, *Manichaeism* has a short section on the community, focused on the relation with the cosmological myth, but excludes the history of the Manichaean religion.

75 BeDuhn, *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma 1*, 2.

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were not constantly in the process of constructing a religious narrative. In fact, they only occasionally referred to its impact on their lives.

The intersection of daily life and religion has returned to the forefront of the study of religion in the last decades. Topics previously associated with the German *Alltagsgeschichte* of the 1970s and the French *Annales* school of the 1960s were revived in the late 1980s and '90s by historians and sociologists interested in "local religion," "lived religion," and "everyday religion."[76] In his landmark volume *Lived Religion in America*, David Hall argues that historians of religion became aware of knowing "next-to-nothing about religion as practiced and precious little about the everyday thinking and doing of lay men and women."[77] Robert Orsi, Nancy Ammerman, and Meredith McGuire decided to refocus on the practices of laity rather than preachers, and on religion in almost mundane places: the home, the workplace, and the garden, instead of institutional centers of religious learning.[78]

A central problem within studies of lived religion is the dichotomy between "ordinary" people and religious elite.[79] There can be no denying that preachers and religious leaders had a different perspective on religion than slaves, merchants, and women, but the emphasis on lived religion should not drive a wedge between different social strata. Adherents to the quotidian turn have stressed, therefore, the dialectical relationship between everyday behavior and textual, institutional religion. This results in two methodological challenges. The first is that scholars of lived religion must *excavate* religion in the messiness of everyday life. This is not always easy, as the complex mosaic of

76 T.A. Tweed, "After the Quotidian Turn: Interpretive Categories and Scholarly Trajectories in the Study of Religion since the 1960s," *Journal of Religion* 95, no. 3 (2015): 365n16 cites the relevant literature. For late antique history, we now have K. Sessa, *Daily Life in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

77 D.D. Hall, ed., *Lived Religion in America: Towards a History of Practice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), vii.

78 R. Orsi, "Everyday Miracles: The Study of Lived Religion," in *Lived Religion in America: Towards a History of Practice*, ed. D.D. Hall (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 4–12; R. Orsi, *The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880–1950*, 3rd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010); M.B. McGuire, *Lived Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); S. Schielke and L. Debevec, "Introduction," in *Ordinary Lives and Grand Schemes: An Anthropology of Everyday Religion*, ed. S. Schielke and L. Debevec (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), 1–16.

79 "Ordinary people" is used as a shorthand for ancient individuals who did not write elaborate religious treatises, nor held religious positions of power. We must keep in mind that the majority of the ordinary people are invisible in our ancient sources. Most written accounts, even in the exceptional case of the papyri from Egypt, derive from well-to-do subsections of society. R.S. Bagnall and R. Cribiore, *Women's Letters from Ancient Egypt. 300 BC–AD 800* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press 2006), 10–11.

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relationships, expectations, and daily individual choices stands in strong contrast to the straightforward discourse of religious specialists, who tend to work from a perspective of coherence and perfection.[80] Historians have therefore focused on alternative types of source material (inscriptions, archaeological finds, papyri), and attempted to read literary sources against the grain to reconstruct the more mundane realities behind elite discourse. Both options involve learning how "to interpret the surviving texts and other artifacts with less reliance on patristic categories and limits."[81] Following such steps, sociologists and historians have slowly opened up the category of religion to include new perspectives based on the idiosyncrasies of their interlocutors and sources. Within this approach, the distinction between *marked* and *unmarked* language, borrowed from linguistics, can be used to understand everyday language carrying particular social and religious meanings that differ from the habitual commonsense usage. Addressing an elderly villager as "father" was unmarked, while the honorific "Apa" was religiously marked. By embracing the centrality of the interlocutor's perspective, however, these approaches run the risk of blindness to structure and favor a postmodern aversion to generalizations beyond the micro level.[82] The Everyday Groupness approach aims to resolve these risks by taking a dialectical perspective with openness to the structural constraints of religious repertoires when they coalesce into social groupings. These groupings can subsequently be generalized into group styles (see below), which may bridge the analytical gap between the micro level of late antique individuals and the macro level of late antique religious change.

The second methodological challenge is to avoid an easy dichotomy in which "popular religion" becomes "presented as in some way a diminution, a misconception or a contamination of '*un*-popular religion.'"[83] Institutionalized religion, even when embedded in elite literary texts, remains an important source for individuals and families to draw upon, including when they adapt

80 L. Meskell and R.W. Preucel, "Identities," in *Companion to Social Archaeology*, ed. L. Meskell and R.W. Preucel (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2004), 129.

81 V. Burrus and R. Lyman, "Shifting the Focus of History," in *Late Ancient Christianity: A People's History of Christianity*, ed. V. Burrus (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 5.

82 N. Ammerman, "Rethinking Religion: Towards a Practice Approach," *American Journal of Sociology* 126, no. 1 (2020): 10 reflects on the field's "drift toward an individualist approach" in light of the minimization of institutional religion, and the modern Western freedom of choice. A different type of criticism is explored in K. Knibbe and H. Kupari, "Theorizing Lived Religion: Introduction," *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 35, no. 2 (2020): 167.

83 P. Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 19.

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and appropriate elements according to their own needs.[84] The active usage of religious ideas and practices by non-professionals is called *appropriation* in Jörg Rüpke's approach to lived ancient religion.[85] Developed by Michel de Certeau, appropriation does not refer in a negative sense to taking what is not one's own, but to the wide range of ways in which people use, transmit, adjust, and accommodate cultural and religious practices and ideas.[86] It is through appropriation that religions come to play a role in everyday life, including institutionalized domains. In this way, the focus of the quotidian turn is *beyond* the scope of officially sanctioned beliefs and practices, though it does not exclude or discredit them.

Practice Theories: From Groupism to Individuals and Families

While the quotidian turn builds on a methodological shift toward individuals, the wider set of practice theories entail a more fundamental sociological

84 W.A. Christian, *Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981); E. Badone, ed., *Religious Orthodoxy & Popular Faith in European Society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); McGuire, *Lived Religion*, 12; Tweed, "After the Quotidian Turn."; S. Sharot, *A Comparative Sociology of World Religions: Virtuosos, Priests, and Popular Religion* (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 13–19; R. Orsi, "Afterword: Everyday Religion and the Contemporary World: The Un-Modern, Or What Was Supposed to Have Disappeared but Did Not," in *Ordinary Lives and Grand Schemes: An Anthropology of Everyday Religion*, ed. S. Schielke and L. Debevec (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), 152. To study everyday religion, according to Nancy Ammerman, does not exclude religious institutions, but primarily deals with them "once they get used by someone other than a professional." N. Ammerman, "Introduction: Observing Religious Modern Lives," in *Everyday Religion: Observing Modern Religious Lives*, ed. N. Ammerman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 5; C. Bender, *Heaven's Kitchen: Living Religion at God's Love We Deliver* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

85 The Lived Ancient Religion project (LAR) was announced in J. Rüpke, "Lived Ancient Religion: Questioning 'Cults' and 'Polis Religion'," *Mythos* 5 (2011): 191–203. Key publications from this research perspective are published in the new journal *Religion in the Roman Empire*. Associated conference proceedings include: J. Rüpke and W. Spickermann, eds., *Reflections on Religious Individuality* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012); J. Rüpke, ed., *The Individual and the Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); E. Rebillard and J. Rüpke, eds., *Group Identity and Religious Individuality in Late Antiquity* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press 2015). The final publications (with further references) are J. Albrecht et al., "Religion in the Making: The Lived Ancient Religion Approach," *Religion* 48, no. 2 (2018): 1–26 and V. Gasparini, et al., *Lived Religion in the Ancient Mediterranean World: Approaching Religious Transformations from Archaeology, History and Classics* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020).

86 M. de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984). Discussed in J.H.F. Dijkstra, "Appropriation: A New Approach to Religious Transformation in Late Antiquity," *Numen* 68, no. 1 (2021): 1–38.

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and philosophical reflection on how actions at the individual level relate to broader explanatory schemes like religion and culture.

Practice theories focus on human action. The focus on what individuals and families do entails a shift from religion as discursively constructed, to religion as practiced and performed.[87] These theories build on the central premise that "through their activities, individuals internalize cultural symbols and meanings" and thereby "also reproduce and transform these symbols and meanings in the social world."[88] The recursive and re-creative nature of tradition is central in the work of theorists such as Anthony Giddens, Pierre Bourdieu, Marshall Sahlins, and William H. Sewell Jr. When applied to everyday religious choices, practice theories make it apparent that individuals not only draw on cultural and religious repertoires, but by doing so replicate and transform these repertoires for future generations. Individual action is not a carbon copy of a religious model, but a situational event informed by previous socializations, experiences, and the needs of a particular situation. A helpful concept for understanding religious practices within specific situations is Brubaker's *groupness*, which indicates "phases of extraordinary cohesion and moments of intensely felt collective solidarity."[89] This notion – specified as *Manichaeanness* for moments of identification with the imagined Manichaean community – allows us to move beyond the common discursive approach to the construction of group identity and into the realm of social practices; it is through everyday human action that imagined communities become real.[90]

In an effort to initiate a "sociology of the individual," Bernard Lahire suggests following individuals through several fields of life to see them "switching" their behavior in different situations and in various types of interactions. Building

87 Paraphrasing G.M. Spiegel, "Introduction," in *Practicing History: New Directions in Historical Writing after the Linguistic Turn* (London: Routledge, 2008), 3.

88 H. Kupari, *Lifelong Religion as Habitus: Religious Practice among Displaced Karelian Orthodox Women in Finland* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 10; M. Polyakov, "Practice Theories: The Latest Turn in Historiography?," *Journal of the Philosophy of History* 6 (2012): 218–35. The relation between structure and agency is a frequently returning topic in microhistorical work, in which seemingly unique cases are taken to illustrate underlying structures. A.I. Port, "History from Below, the History of Everyday Life, and Microhistory," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, ed. J. Wright (Oxford: Elsevier, 2015), 108–13. Specifically focused on (Christian) Late Antiquity are the contributions in P. Eich and E. Faber, eds., *Religiöser Alltag in der Spätantike* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2013). Unfortunately, this last volume fails to establish a theoretically informed common ground.

89 Brubaker, "Ethnicity without Groups," 168.

90 R. Wuthnow, *What Happens When We Practice Religion? Textures of Devotion in Everyday Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020), 46–53 on situational cues triggering religious habits.

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on the work of Pierre Bourdieu, and in particular his notion of a *habitus* comprised of multiple dispositions, Lahire describes individual action as following from a match between situations and acquired dispositions. Dispositions are the result of socialization; the individual has learned how to think and behave as a Manichaean catechumen, an inhabitant of Kellis, and a grandfather.[91] These dispositions are latently available, ready to be activated in corresponding circumstances, and leading to moments of groupness. According to Lahire:

> [B]ringing them [dispositions] back to activity may depend on the social micro-situation, (e.g. interaction with a particular actor, a certain situation, permitting schemes or habits to be actualized that are inhibited in some other type of interaction and/or with some other actor), on the domain of practices (e.g. applying in relation to food consumption different cultural schemes from those applied in relation to cultural consumption), on social universe (e.g. doing in the family or leisure world what one cannot do in the professional world), on the social group (e.g. doing in a certain social group what one would not do in some other social group), or again on the moment in the life cycle.[92]

This is what I will call the *situatedness* of religious gestures and language, which are activated or considered salient in specific times and places. For Lahire, "the activation of a particular disposition can be conceived of as the product of *the interaction of* (*relations between*) *internal and external forces*."[93] The elements of the context or situation (external forces) combine with dispositions that have been established during past socializations (internal forces) and provide fertile ground for the activation of religious or group-specific dispositions.

Éric Rebillard, in his slim but influential *Christians and their Many Identities in Late Antiquity*, highlights the plurality of ancient individuals' identities.

91 B. Lahire, "From the Habitus to an Individual Heritage of Dispositions. Towards a Sociology at the Level of the Individual," *Poetics* 31 (2003): 351. Bourdieu defines *habitus* as "an acquired system of generative schemes objectively adjusted to the particular conditions in which it is constituted; the habitus engenders all the thought, all the perceptions, and all the actions consistent with those conditions and not others." P. Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 95.

92 B. Lahire, *The Plural Actor* (Cambridge: Polity, 2011), 57.

93 Lahire, "Habitus," 353 (his italics). Cf. Symbolic interactionism, outlined in I. Tavory, "Interactionism: Meaning and Self as Process," in *Handbook of Contemporary Sociological Theory*, ed. S. Abrutyn (Cham: Springer, 2016), 85–98. Methodological reflections on the translation from observations of action in one situation to another situation, see D. Trouille and I. Tavory, "Shadowing: Warrants for Intersituational Variation in Ethnography," *Sociological Methods & Research* 48 no. 3 (2019): 534–560.

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These individuals evaluated situations (consciously or unconsciously) and acted on one of their membership affiliations. North African Christians, for example, could either prioritize a Christian identification and resist the call to sacrifice to the genius of the Roman emperor, or affirm their belonging to the imperial world by making the required sacrifices. The latter, according to Rebillard, was done because they were "either unaware that it might be contradictory to their Christian membership, or because they simply did not activate their Christian membership in this context."[94] From this perspective, these ancient individuals *were* not Christians, they *did* Christian acts or they *became* Christian each time by embracing a Christian group identification and performing associated behavior.[95]

When does religion affect situations so fundamentally that individuals align their behavior and self-understanding with imagined religious communities and develop explicit religious strategies of action? Cultural sociologist Ann Swidler distinguishes between the influence of culture on *ideology*, *traditions*, and *common sense* in *settled* and *unsettled* periods. In *unsettled* circumstances or periods of life, culture's influence on social action is very pronounced, as people look for explicit cultural ideas and practices to navigate crises or develop new strategies of action to deal with uncertainty. Think for example about people going through a divorce, or about migrants entering a new country.[96] To outside observers, it may appear as if culture is more prominent in these unsettled circumstances, since people develop explicitly formulated *ideologies*.[97] When the crisis is over, and life has settled down, culture exerts another type of influence on action. Many cultural elements have by then become part of an unarticulated way of seeing the world. During such *settled* periods of life, religious

94 Rebillard, *Christians and their Many Identities*, 60. In a similar analysis, Rebillard points out how Augustine promoted to the status of martyr "the Christian who sticks to his or her Christian identity as his or her unique principle of action." E. Rebillard, "Religious Sociology: Being Christian in the Time of Augustine," in *A Companion to Augustine*, ed. M. Vessey (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 49. Further examples of these "hierarchical and lateral arrangements of category membership sets" in Augustine's letters and sermons are discussed in E. Rebillard, "Late Antique Limits of Christianness: North Africa in the Age of Augustine," in *Group Identity and Religious Individuality in Late Antiquity*, ed. E. Rebillard and J. Rüpke (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2015), 293–317. Cf. H. Wendt, *At the Temple Gates: The Religion of Freelance Experts in the Early Roman Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

95 E. Rebillard, "Everyday Christianity in Carthage at the Time of Tertullian," *Religion in the Roman Empire* 2, no. 1 (2016): 92.

96 A. Swidler, "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies," *American Sociological Review* 54, no. 2 (1986): 279.

97 A. Swidler, *Talk of Love: How Culture Matters* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 89.

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and cultural repertoire is a toolkit people draw from without much explicit articulation. Individual actions in settled life thrive on what Bourdieu calls "the feel for the game" or a "practical sense" of things. The *common sense* that needs no explicit support or elaboration is pervasive throughout settled life, but it is also more fragmented than ideologies. People invoke elements from their available repertoires intermittently, and often implicitly, as part of daily life, without necessarily subscribing to a full set of religious ideas and practices.[98] *Traditions* take a middle position on the continuum between ideology and common sense. They consist of beliefs and practices that are presented as established facts that help to define a group. In contrast to ideologies, which are closely tied to overarching worldviews, there is a loose fit between traditions and broader schemas, and tradition allows for more flexibility and less explicit systematizations than ideology.[99] Culture's impact on action in settled life is therefore almost invisible. People habitually draw from their various cultural repertoires, adapt it to new purposes, and create a multitude of resources without explicit justification or systematization. People prefer this multiplicity because it helps them to approach situations from different angles, with the possibility of shifting to other metaphors when they deem it necessary, which Swidler calls "strategies of network diversification."[100] These strategies are visible, for example, in the way modern individuals "play" with spirituality and "try out" religious identities, before (or: instead of) wholeheartedly embracing a religious group identification.[101]

The resulting multiplicity of social roles and identities sometimes creates tension.[102] Scholars interested in the dynamics of multiple social roles and self-understandings posit various types of intersecting identities: nested,

98 Swidler, "Culture in Action," 277.

99 Swidler, *Talk of Love*, 97.

100 Swidler, *Talk of Love*, 183. This notion is applied to religion by R.F. Campany, "Religious Repertoires and Contestation: A Case Study Based on Buddhist Miracle Tales," *History of Religions* 52, no. 2 (2012): 99–141.

101 M.A. Davidsen, *The Spiritual Tolkien Milieu: A Study of Fiction-Based Religion* (PhD dissertation, Leiden University, 2014), 258–75 on the construction and maintenance of plausibility structures in the elven movement; T.M. Luhrmann, *Persuasions of the Witch's Craft: Ritual Magic in Contemporary England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 312 describes how newcomers in the *magical milieu* gradually adopt an identity as magicians through a gradual "interpretive drift" by which they begin to see themselves and the world through a group-specific narrative.

102 Although not all of these identities are of equal standing. On identity-hierarchies, see R.D. Ashmore, K. Deaux, and T. McLaughlin-Volpe, "An Organizing Framework for Collective Identity: Articulation and Significance of Multidimensionality," *Psychological Bulletin* 130, no. 1 (2004): 80–114.

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crosscutting, and separation identities. Nested identities are strongly related: "I am a Londoner; I am English; I am British; I am European (and/or perhaps Anglo-American)"; crosscutting identities have an interplay between the two: "I am French and a diplomat," while separation identities bear no direct relation to one another: "I am a woman and I am an avid opera-goer."[103] Potential conflict arises when crosscutting identities have conflicting claims and behavioral dispositions. This is especially visible in what Swidler calls the "integrated mode," in which individuals aim to integrate cultural or religious repertoire and their personal experience into a single framework. In many situations, however, people demonstrate Swidler's "segregated mode," in which cultural and religious repertoire is kept separate from experiences in other facets of life.[104] One can be a Christian without having thought through all practical and doctrinal elements, or articulating how the various schemes of behavioral expectation relate to each other. Looming conflict between disparate roles and identities is, however, defined by more than just internal factors. Individuals do not only self-identify; they are also categorized by others in social situations through processes such as stereotyping and discrimination, or by legal or administrative classifications. The complex entanglement of *self-identification*, *identification* by others, and *categorization* reminds us that individuals are not simply the carriers of pre-established cultural packages or identities.[105] Makarios and Pamour, two of the ancient individuals who will be central in the following chapters, acted as Manichaeans, but this identification intersected with other roles as fathers, sons, merchants, villagers, and Egyptians.

How these theoretical reflections on multiplicity can be operationalized to study the Manichaeans at Kellis is not self-evident. Building on contemporary approaches in sociological studies, I will discern four basic categories of social action in which religious groupness takes shape: talking, choosing, performing, and consuming. The following chapters will examine situations in which the Manichaean group was discursively constructed during routine correspondence (talking), in which it defined and framed the choices of individuals (choosing), in which it was expressed by ritual enactments or

103 R. Mairs, "Intersecting Identities in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt," in *Egypt: Ancient Histories, Modern Archaeologies*, ed. R.J. Dann and K. Exell (New York: Cambria Press, 2013), 163–92.

104 Swidler, *Talk of Love*, 53–70.

105 R. Brubaker and F. Cooper, "Beyond 'Identity,'" *Theory and Society* 29 (2000): 17. On the use of "identity" for the ancient world, see K.B. Stratton, "Identity," in *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Mediterranean Religions*, ed. B.S. Spaeth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 220–51; J. Lieu, *Christian Identity in Jewish and Greco-Roman World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

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performative actions (performing), and in which it was enacted as part of ordinary consumption patterns (consuming).[106] The patterned regularities within such action and interaction will provide a framework for evaluating the specific ways that Manichaeanness resonated – to the extent that it did so at all – within everyday life.

From Individual Practices to Emerging Group Styles

The shifting identifications of individuals and the occasional activation of previously acquired dispositions are not without consequence in society. As John L. Comaroff puts it, "identities are not things but relations," which become "properties of individuals and collectivities, and they gradually become detached even from these, taking on a life of their own."[107] To reflect on the territory between individual religious practices and full-blown group-specific religions, I will use the concept of *group styles*, which sociologists Nina Eliasoph and Paul Lichterman developed to examine repertoires of action, ideas, and social strategies of interaction. Group styles define adequate and acceptable behavior, speech norms, and conceptual maps in specific settings; the widespread American practice of forming voluntary civil associations in response to societal problems is an example of a group style.[108] Scholars of the ancient world have identified several common group styles of the period, including a sacrificial group style, organized in the civic sphere and characterized by temporary moments of groupness, and a philosophical group style, which was organized in didactic dyads and characterized by frequent interaction between teachers and their students.[109] Reading communities constituted another common group style, and mostly consisted of loose virtual networks for which physical colocation was infrequent or absent. Additional communal group styles included large-scale gatherings involving intense emotional

106 J. Fox and C. Miller-Idris, "Everyday Nationhood," *Ethnicities* 8, no. 4 (2008): 537–38. Summarized in Rebillard, "Everyday Christianity in Carthage at the Time of Tertullian," 91–102.

107 J.L. Comaroff, "Ethnicity, Nationalism, and the Politics of Difference in an Age of Revolution," in *The Politics of Difference: Ethnic Premises in a World of Power*, ed. E.N. Wilmsen and P. McAllister (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 165. Discussed in M. van Beek, "Beyond Identity Fetishism: 'Communal' Conflict in Ladakh and the Limits of Autonomy," *Cultural Anthropology* 15, no. 4 (2001): 527.

108 N. Eliasoph and P. Lichterman, "Culture in Interaction," *American Journal of Sociology* 108, no. 4 (2003): 737.

109 W. Löhr, "Modelling Second-Century Christian Theology: Christian Theology as *Philosophia*," in *Christianity in the Second Century*, ed. J. Carleton Paget and J. Lieu (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 151–68.

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experiences, found in some of the so-called mystery cults, and the commensal activities of Greco-Roman associations.

The various styles of "grouping together" transcend traditional group boundaries. The group-specific religions of Late Antiquity, in fact, consisted of a variety of group styles, each *producing* different kinds of belonging through *maps*, *scenes*, *group bonds*, and *speech norms*.[110] First, *maps* provide conceptual reference points for individual actors, defining their place within religious narratives. Second, changes in *scenes* or *situations* transform expectations and behavioral norms in such a way that narrative is put into action. Third, *group bonds* define the way actors understand relations within a group, or within specific situations. Fourth, *speech norms* determine appropriate speech for actors within group settings.[111] This set of concepts further improves our grasp of lived ancient religions and the dynamics of short- and long-term social grouping.[112]

Sources and the Structure of the Book

A word of caution: papyrological and archaeological sources come in many shapes and forms. Some of these texts and objects adhere to relatively well-defined genres and models, while others are personalized for situations unknown to the modern observer. Papyrus letters are notorious for their ambiguity. Letter writers hardly ever sketch the entire situation, which is even more difficult, as we often have only one side of the correspondence. As a result, the interpretative framework of a historian can fundamentally affect the interpretation of papyrus letters. As David Frankfurter points out,

110 P. Lichterman et al., "Grouping Together in Lived Ancient Religion: Individual Interacting and the Formation of Groups," *Religion in the Roman Empire* 3, no. 1 (2017): 3–10. Cf. T. Whitmarsh, "Atheism as a Group Identity in Ancient Greece," *Religion in the Roman Empire* 3, no. 1 (2017): 61; P. Lichterman, "Religion in Public Action: From Actors to Settings," *Sociological Theory* 30, no. 1 (2012): 15–36.

111 Lichterman et al., "Grouping Together in Lived Ancient Religion," 4.

112 Several contributions in the 2017 (3.1) volume of *Religion in the Roman Empire* have used these conceptual tools, although it is noteworthy that most of them discuss short-term social grouping. Their conceptualizations resemble Mische and White's work on network domains. For them, a situation "involves predictable, stylized interaction that suddenly becomes fraught with uncertainty, danger and/or opportunity." The predictable nature of the previous moment depended primarily on the array of routinized stories, symbols and idioms of such network domains as family or business. A. Mische and H.C. White, "Between Conversation and Situation: Public Switching Dynamics across Network Domains," *Social Research* 65, no. 3 (1998): 698.

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> it is in the nature of papyri that, within some limitations, one can make the evidence mean whatever one wants to make it mean: a collection of classical literature from Oxyrhynchus can suggest a thriving and broadly literate gymnasium culture or an insular elite; a profusion of "magical" texts can mean a cultural decline into occult and selfish concerns or the ongoing attention to private ritual; a derogatory aside about "Egyptians" can signify an overarching Hellenistic racism or one person's frustrated attempt at cultural self-definition in a far more complex ethnic situation.[113]

Without a doubt, this admonition is valid for all historical work. Any evaluation of historical interpretation, therefore, must reflect on the methodological assumptions and theoretical predispositions of the interpreter; the sources do not simply tell a story by themselves.[114]

Since Nicholas Baker-Brian noted that "the responsible reconciliation of the data supplied by the documentary material from Kellis with Manichaean literary-theological texts remains a relatively unexplored area of investigation,"[115] I will suggest four methodological principles for interpreting these papyrological sources: (1) methodological agnosticism, (2) contextual situations, (3) minimalist religious interpretation, and (4) consistent non-eclectic reading. First, as a historical analysis of ancient religion, this book will not touch upon the existence or nonexistence of the transempirical world. Methodological agnosticism indicates that religion is only studied where it can be observed through empirical social and historical analysis. Questions concerning the truth of the transempirical world are outside the realm of historical scholarship; the religious claims of believers are not.[116] Second, particular truth

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113 D. Frankfurter, "Review of Roger S. Bagnall, Egypt in Late Antiquity. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993," *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* 94.03.19 (1994).

114 Post-structuralist and postmodern theories have stressed the interpretative nature of historical research. Keith Jenkins correctly states that, "it is never really a matter of the facts *per se* but the weight, position, combination and significance they carry *vis-à-vis* each other in the construction of explanations that is at issue." K. Jenkins, *Re-Thinking History* (London: Routledge, 1991), 33.

115 N.J. Baker-Brian, "Mass and Elite in Late Antique Religion: The Case of Manichaeism," in *Mass and Elite in the Greek and Roman Worlds: From Sparta to Late Antiquity*, ed. R. Evans (London: Routledge, 2017), 181.

116 The outside perspective of the scholar is agnostic *in principle*, as we cannot know whether the transempirical exists. On the other hand, I agree with Davidsen that the scholarly outsider perspective is atheist or naturalist *in practice*, as the transempirical interpretation is not an option that can be pursued. Davidsen, *The Spiritual Tolkien Milieu*, 30–32 arguing for "methodological naturalism or non-supernaturalism"; J. Platvoet, "Theologie

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claims or practices have to be evaluated within their specific context. Despite the idea that Manichaeism is a coherent religious tradition, we cannot simply assume the sameness of Manichaean practice in various regions and periods. Just as the theological logic and hermeneutics of American Protestantism cannot be used to explain Greek Orthodox practice, so we cannot borrow unrestrictedly from the more abundant Iranian, Arabic, and Chinese accounts of Manichaean practice in order to elucidate Manichaeism in Kellis. The natural inclination to harmonize, to combine various strands of evidence despite their geographical and historical differences, is a risky academic strategy. This way of filling in gaps suggests a coherent social entity that either never existed or cannot be proven beyond speculation: it merely presents Manichaeism as it *ought* to have been. Meanwhile, abstaining from such harmonization does not exclude explicit comparison between sources from various regions. Third, when in doubt, the sources should be interpreted carefully, without overstating the religiosity of these ancient individuals and families, or essentializing them into a religious singularity. Instead of equating all ambiguous phrases with Manichaean practices, I propose adopting a minimalist religious interpretation, in which the Manichaean interpretation requires specific argumentation. This also means that fourth, eclectic readings and cherry picking should be avoided. Less tantalizing passages in the Kellis papyri have to be examined in order to contextualize instances of marked Manichaeanness. Together, these four methodological principles guarantee a sober but fair interpretation, even if they may render some of the religious practices of Manichaeism invisible because they do not stand out from local habits and conventions. A fair and minimalist interpretation should be willing to see how little Manichaeism may have mattered, instead of focusing on the most explicit and breathtaking evidence only.[117] The Everyday Groupness approach aims for a middle position between the harmonization of sources into a coherent narrative of religious interaction and conflict on the one hand, and a full deconstruction of the narrative and individualization of all religious options on the other hand.

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als dubbelspel: over verscheidenheid en dynamiek van theologie en godsdienstwetenschap," *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 63, no. 3 (2009): 234 for the "agnostic" study of religion. J. Platvoet, *Comparing Religions: A Limitative Approach. An Analysis of Akan, Para-Creole, and Ifo-Sananda Rites and Prayers* (The Hague: Mouton, 1983), 4–5,15–17, 21, and 29; W. Hanegraaff, "Empirical Method in the Study of Esotericism," *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 7, no. 2 (1995): 576–605.

117 Echoing R. Brubaker et al., *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvian Town* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 206. Compare the approach and results of Karen Stern's investigation into the Jewishness of North-African Jews. K.B. Stern, *Inscribing Devotion and Death: Archaeological Evidence for Jewish Populations of North Africa* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 47.

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The following seven chapters will delve into the everyday world of individual Kellites, their letters, and the situatedness of their religious choices while walking this tightrope.

Chapter 1 begins with the papyri associated with Makarios, Pamour, and their families. Their personal letters inform us about many aspects of their lives, including their involvement in textile trade and interaction with the Manichaean elect. The letters sometimes employ Manichaean phrases and terminology that directly correspond to well-known Manichaean liturgical texts. On other occasions, the letter writers use vocabulary derived from repertoires shared with neighbors, particularly fourth-century Christians. The archaeological find location of these papyri also sheds light on the domestic setting and the wider village-based network. Chapter 2 highlights the complex sociocultural environment by outlining some of the evidence for various religious and cultural repertoires. Despite its remote location in the desert, Kellis was not a rural backwater. The architectural and artistic remains reveal that it was firmly connected to the Nile valley, as well as the Roman Empire at large. Previous claims that these people belonged to a sectarian and persecuted group, moreover, are highly unlikely, as they were in direct contact with some of the local and regional administrative and military elite. Some religious maltreatment may have occurred in the Nile valley, but Makarios's and Pamour's families lived in relative peace.

The subsequent chapters are built around five key themes of Manichaean life: self-designation, gift giving, communal gathering, death ritual, and book writing. These themes logically follow from the current state of Manichaean Studies and can be informed by the new documents from Kellis. Chapter 3 is devoted to self-designators in the personal letters. The authors draw on an explicit Manichaean repertoire in some phrases, but frequently opt for more neutral designators associated with the village, family, and neighborhood. While the use of Coptic, at first glance, seems to correspond to demarcated group boundaries, further consideration shows that it marks a more ambiguous network connoting family, regional, and religious affiliations. Chapter 4 focuses on gifts and economic transactions between inhabitants of Kellis. While the Manichaean families in the oasis were familiar with the Manichaean ideology of gift giving, many of their letters attest to less clearly delineated transactions in which economic interactions, village support, and religious obligations blended. Passages that have been read as evidence for the Manichaean system of almsgiving to the elect, such as those mentioning "the *agape*," do not inform us directly about the regular performance of a Manichaean ritual meal. As the elect spent most of their time outside the village, traveling in the Nile valley,

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alms were given over a distance, and the ritual meal was not (or infrequently) performed in Kellis.

Chapter 5 treats the evidence for specific Manichaean gatherings in the oasis, in particular, the wooden tablets and papyri containing psalms and prayers, some of which have direct parallels in the Manichaean texts from Medinet Madi. The ritual performance of these psalms and prayers contributed to marked moments of Manichaeanness, and therefore potentially to a distinct group identification. Chapter 6 zooms in on situations in which Manichaeans gathered and commemorated the departed. This included at least two distinct rituals involving singing and almsgiving: a ritualized setting at the deathbed and a commemorative event. Despite the extensive funerary archaeology of Kellis, there are no specific indications of a Manichaean identity among the burials or in the two large cemeteries of Kellis. This absence of extent tangible markers suggests that Manichaean families chose to follow local burial customs and performed Manichaean rituals on other occasions. Chapter 7 analyzes the frequent references to books and scribal activity. The combination of papyrological evidence and archaeological finds at the site reveal what the inhabitants of Houses 1–3 read, and who participated in the scribal network that produced these manuscripts. Manichaean books were copied on wood and papyrus by catechumens, who also produced (or read) classical literature, biblical texts, and apocryphal texts. This plurality occurred despite the fact that inhabitants had direct access to some of the books attributed to Mani, thereby illustrating how activated Manichaeanness and an unmarked wider social repertoire go together.

The conclusion returns to the value of modern academic classifications and the local nature of most of the Kellis papyri, arguing that focusing on everyday religious practice not only adds an unruly layer of analysis, but also offers a vantage point from which to construct alternative models of religious groupness and the changing religious landscape of Late Antiquity.

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CHAPTER 1

Makarios's Family: Manichaeans at Home in the Oasis

> Are (not) you yourself a catechumen?
>
> MAKARIOS TO KYRIA[1]

Sometime in the middle of the fourth century CE, a man named Makarios rebuked his sister-in-law for what he considered improper behavior. She "reached this place to make apparent some ungodliness and inhumanity," while Makarios himself had behaved correctly. Rhetorically, he asks, "are (not) you yourself a catechumen?"[2] Kyria's answer to these accusations has not been preserved – in fact, the papyrus is so fragmentary that it is not always clear when Maria or her sister Kyria was addressed – but it stands to reason that she would have understood the connection between her behavior and the norms of the Manichaean catechumate. She may not have agreed with Makarios on the specific matter, but apparently, Manichaeanness mattered enough to be incorporated in his complaint.

This chapter will pursue a microhistorical approach to the lives of two families (Makarios and Maria and their children, and Pamour and his two brothers), situate them in the context of fourth-century Kellis, and examine their letters for traces of Manichaeanness. The archaeological context of the papyrus documents gives important insights into the social and economic setting of the families. In combination with the papyrological evidence, it shows two families with relatively well-to-do backgrounds, who had extensive social connections throughout the Oasis and Egypt at large. The relative affluence of these people provides the background for small and incidental references to Manichaean

1 ⲉⲛⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲟ ⲟⲩⲕⲁⲑⲏⲕⲟⲩⲙ̣[ⲉ]ⲛⲏ ϩⲱⲉ̣ P.Kellis v Copt. 22.61. At line 45, the letter is addressed to Kyria, and it is unclear whether the author continues his conversation with Maria after line 60 or complains about Kyria's behavior.

2 See previous note, followed by ϩⲁⲡⲱϩ ϣⲁ ⲡⲓ[ⲙ]ⲁ̣ ⲁⲧⲣⲉⲟⲩⲱⲛϩ ⲟⲩⲙⲛ̄ⲧ̣[ⲁ]ⲧⲛ̣ⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲧⲣⲱⲙⲉ P.Kellis v Copt. 22.62–63.

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beliefs and practices. To gauge properly the role of Manichaean identification, the village context must be kept in mind. The geographical setting in the western desert is particularly relevant, as it made frequent long-distance traveling necessary. The underlying anxiety about safety on the road and the family's health in their absence sets the stage for many of Makarios's and Pamour's letters, in which conflicts also abound. Against this background, we can identify situations in which they adopted a Manichaean group identification.

Kellis in the Dakhleh Oasis

Kellis was the Roman name for the village (*kome*) located 2.5 km from the modern town of Ismant in the Dakhleh Oasis. Even though it was one of the four large settlements in the oasis, it never reached the size of the city of Mothis (modern Mut el-Kharab, excavated by Colin Hope and Gillian Bowen), Trimithis (Amheida, excavations under the direction of Roger Bagnall), and Imrt ('Ain Birbiyeh, maybe the site of ancient Mesobe). Unlike Trimithis, Kellis never achieved the official status of a *polis*, and its population size has been estimated at about 1,000 to 1,500 at a time.[3] Most of the surrounding settlements were small agricultural hamlets that depended on the towns for their facilities.[4] This network of agricultural settlements and associated wells, villages, and towns constituted the Dakhleh Oasis (see Figure 1).

3 C.A. Hope, "The Kellis 1 Cemetery: Roman Period Burial Practices in Dakhleh Oasis," in *Le myrte et la rose: Mélanges offerts à Françoise Dunand par ses élèves, collègues et amis*, ed. G. Tallet and C. Zivie-Coche (Montpellier: CENIM, 2014), 332. Cf. R.S. Bagnall and B.W. Frier, *The Demography of Roman Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 55. Boozer has suggested a population of 25.000 for Trimithis, while Bagnall follows Wagner in suggesting Mothis was a little larger than Trimithis. A.L. Boozer, "Urban Change at Late Roman Trimithis (Dakhleh Oasis, Egypt)," in *Egypt in the First Millennium AD: Perspectives from New Fieldwork*, ed. E. O'Connell (Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 29; R.S. Bagnall, *The Kellis Agricultural Account Book* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1997), 73.

4 C.A. Hope, "The Roman-Period Houses of Kellis in Egypt's Dakhleh Oasis," in *Housing and Habitat in the Ancient Mediterranean: Cultural and Environmental Responses*, ed. A.A. Di Castro, C.A. Hope, and B.E. Parr (Leuven: Peeters, 2015), 200. On Mesobe, see Bagnall, *KAB*, 74–5. G. Wagner, *Les oasis d'Égypte à l'époque grecque, romaine et byzantine d'après les documents grecs* (Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire, 1987) was published before the results of the DOP could be included. General introductions by the team of Amheida are R.S. Bagnall, *Eine Wüstenstadt: Leben und Kultur in einer ägyptischen Oase im 4. Jahrhundert n. Chr.* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2013); R.S. Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City* (New York: Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, New York University Press, 2015) – reviewed in M. Brand, "Religious Diversity in the Egyptian Desert: New Findings from the Dakhleh Oasis," *Entangled Religions* 4 (2017): 17–39; R.S. Bagnall and G. Tallet eds., *The Great Oasis of Egypt:*

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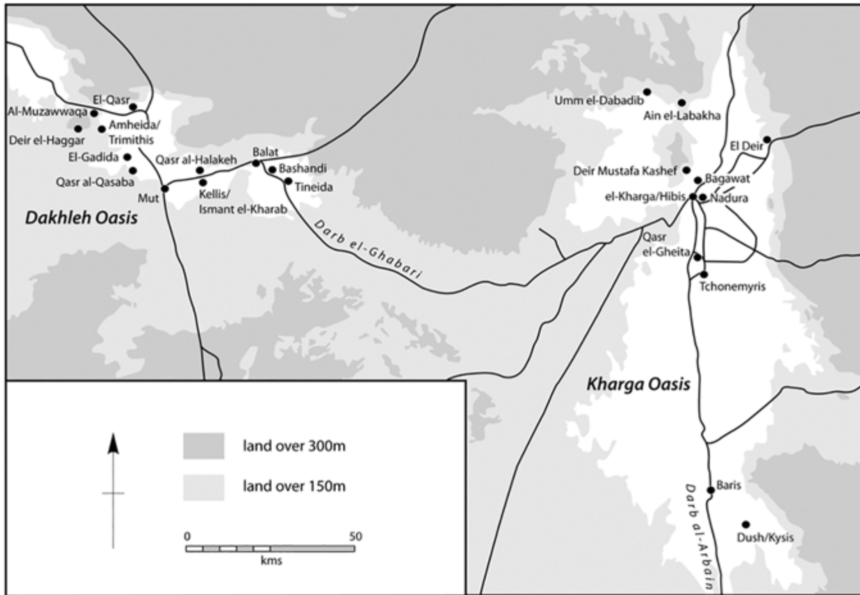

FIGURE 1 Kellis in the Dakhleh Oasis. Drawn by M. Mathews
COURTESY OF A.L. BOOZER

In Roman times, the Dakhleh Oasis and its neighbor, the Kharga Oasis, were designated together as the Great Oasis.[5] They belonged to a series of oases located in five geographical depressions carved into the Libyan Desert plateau. The Great Oasis was connected to the Farafra Oasis, the Bahariya Oasis (together called the "Small Oasis"), and the Siwa Oasis. Following desert routes, one could travel from Dakhleh all the way north to Siwa and the Fayyum. A more direct route to the Nile valley from Kellis via Kharga, about 365 km at best via the ancient roads, would have taken the villagers about three to four days, depending on the mode of transportation (see Figure 2).[6] Such distances

The Kharga and Dakhla Oases in Antiquity (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019). Excavations at Ain el-Gedida, one of the small hamlets, convey a sense of communalism. The interconnected buildings with shared kitchens suggest communal and seasonal occupation, instead of fully developed villages. Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 166–8 (Aravecchia).

5 Division by Olympiadorus of Thebes, corresponding to the current names "Dakhleh" and "Kharga" Oasis. Wagner, *Les oasis d'Égypte*, 131.

6 Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 29 (Bagnall). Some of the problems and restrictions experienced during traveling are summarized by C. Adams, "'There and Back Again': Getting around in Roman Egypt," in *Travel and Geography in Roman Egypt*, ed. C. Adams and R. Laurence (London: Routledge, 2001), 154–56. Strabo, on the other hand, suggested the journey from Abydos to the oases took seven days. On traveling and rest places see also R.B. Jackson, *At Empire's Edge: Exploring Rome's Egyptian Frontier* (New Haven: Yale University Press,

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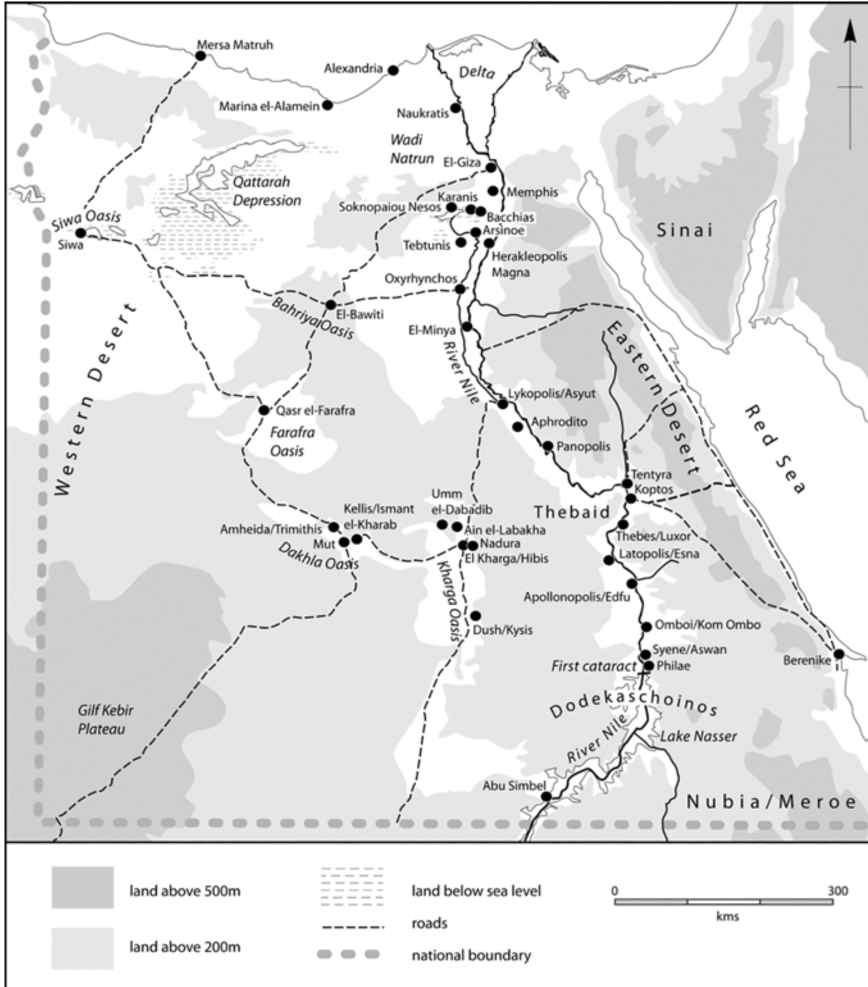

FIGURE 2 Dakhleh Oasis in Egypt. Drawn by M. Mathews
COURTESY OF A.L. BOOZER

were regularly traversed by the residents of Roman Kellis, who traveled extensively. The impact of geographical location on the social and economic lives of Kellites is visible in the papyri; traveling must have characterized many of their days.

2002), 198–200. The indication of a journey of four days and four nights between Khargah and Dakhleh in M.Chrest. 78 (late fourth century) must have been an exaggeration. Wagner, *Les oasis d'Égypte*, 143.

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Most of the villages and towns in the Dakhleh Oasis show signs of an expanding population during the Roman period, with a sudden decline and abandonment in the late fourth century – albeit exceptional areas were inhabited for a longer time.[7] As a result, Roman period material is found abundantly; visible architectural modifications characterize finds from the last decades of the fourth century, after which entire villages gradually declined and were abandoned. Kellis, following this pattern, was inhabited from the late Ptolemaic period until the last decade of the fourth century. The last dated document from the village is a Greek horoscope from the year 392 CE. Soon after this date, wind and sand roamed freely.[8]

Why the site was abandoned at the end of the fourth century is unknown. A number of suggestions were made to explain the sudden decline, but none of them reached general acceptance. Maybe it was related to environmental changes. The current climate is extremely arid, with an annual rainfall of about 0.7 mm and temperatures ranging from 21.5°C on an average January day to 39°C in July.[9] This climate, probably not any cooler in antiquity, made agriculture difficult. It was only with the introduction of the waterwheel (*saqiya*) during the early Roman period that agriculture advanced. While this technology may have contributed to the abundant wealth of the oasis, the increasing

7 Exceptional is Al-Qasr, which was inhabited continuously from the third century until the present; Deir Abu Matta with occupation into the seventh century; and Mut el-Kharab, which was occupied from the Old Kingdom until the Islamic period and today. Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 173 (Bagnall). On Mut, see C.A. Hope, "The Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab and Mut El-Kharab in 2001," *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 12 (2001): 47.

8 C.A. Hope (with an Appendix by G.E. Bowen), "Excavations in the Settlement of Ismant el-Kharab in 1995–1999," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994–1995 to 1998–1999 Field Seasons*, ed. C.A. Hope and G.E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002), 205–206; G.E. Bowen, "The Spread of Christianity in Egypt: Archaeological Evidence from Dakhleh and Kharga Oases," in *Egyptian Culture and Society: Studies in Honour of Naguib Kanawati*, ed. A. Woods, A. McFarlane, and S. Binder (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2010), 19. The last dated document derived from D/8 and its dating is discussed in K.A. Worp and T. de Jong, "More Greek Horoscopes from Kellis (Dakhleh Oasis)," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 137 (2001): 206. On the date of the occupation of Kellis, see C.A. Hope, "Observations on the Dating of the Occupation at Ismant el-Kharab," in *Oasis Papers 1*, ed. C.A. Marlow and A.J. Mills (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2001), 43–59. This date is confirmed by numismatic evidence and the pottery assemblages; only three Roman coins from the period between 388–394 CE have been found (of the *salvs reipvblicae*-type) and there is no ceramic material indicative of the fifth century.

9 A.J. Mills, "Research in the Dakhleh Oasis," in *Origin and Early Development of Food-Producing Cultures in North-Eastern Africa*, ed. L. Krzyzaniek and M. Kobusiewicz (Poznań: Polish Academy of Sciences, Poznań Branch: Poznań Archaeological Museum, 1984), 205–10.

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demand on the agricultural land also led to soil depletion.[10] Another environmental factor to take into account is the wind, which continuously shifted large amounts of sand, thereby creating moving sand dunes that could end up covering fertile lands. Architectural finds all over the oasis attest to the challenge this posed to the inhabitants: wells had to be deepened and reactivated artificially, channels dug, thresholds raised, and additional windscreens built.[11] The fourth-century residents of the oasis may have fallen prey to the incoming wind and sand, which in the course of a couple of years destroyed their ways of living.

In addition to environmental explanations, scholars have suggested that increasing insecurity on the roads to the Nile valley contributed to the declining population and abandonment of Kellis. Sixth-century author John Moschus tells about tribesmen holding elderly monks for ransom in the Kharga Oasis.[12] How this story relates to the visible presence of Roman military fortifications along those very roads is not clear, but Moschus conceives of the oases as dangerous border zones, vulnerable to threats from "uncivilized" tribes in the desert. Was this more than a literary stereotype? Could it be that even the Roman army was unable to guarantee safety on the roads from the oasis to the valley?[13]

Dakhleh's wealth was built on the combination of road safety and the exceptional environmental conditions of the late Roman period. In contrast to the Nile valley's seasonal production, agriculture in the oasis was facilitated all year long by subterranean reservoirs of water.[14] Private and collective water wells were a source of wealth for the entire oasis, to the extent that Trimithis's ostraca mention more than forty wells by name.[15] Additional insights into the agricultural nature of the village economy derive from the so-called Kellis

10 J.E. Knudstad and R.A. Frey, "Kellis: The Architectural Survey of the Romano-Byzantine Town at Ismant el-Kharab," in *Reports from the Survey of the Dakhleh Oasis 1977–198*, ed. C.S. Churcher and A.J. Mills (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999), 213. Colin Hope (personal communication May 2016) reminded me, however, of the lack of strong indications of salt in the bodies from the cemeteries. If climate change indeed caused the saltification of the soil, one would expect to see traces in bioarchaeological materials.

11 Wells and channels reactivated: Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 17–18 (Davoli). Windscreen and raised threshold of House 3: C.A. Hope, O.E. Kaper, and G.E. Bowen, "Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab – 1992," *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 3 (1992): 41.

12 Cited in Wagner, *Les oasis d'Égypte*, 384.

13 Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 172–3 (Bagnall). P.Kellis VII Copt. 127 refers to an attack on the road and expresses fear for the military (?) commander.

14 Jackson, *At Empire's Edge*, 159.

15 R.S. Bagnall and G. Ruffini, *Ostraka from Trimithis Volume 1: Texts from the 2004–2007 Seasons* (New York: Institute for the Study of the Ancient World and New York University Press, 2012), 31–39.

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Agricultural Account Book (KAB), which contains the records of all income and expenditures of a section of a large estate.[16] It strongly suggests that the advantage of multiple harvests a year outweighed high transportation costs, attested to in numerous receipts for freight costs by camel or by donkey.[17] This gave oasis farmers a slight advantage over their competitors in the Nile valley. As a result, the primarily agricultural economy developed a flourishing transportation section and attracted families like Pamour's, who lived off the trade between the oasis and the Nile valley.

Locating Makarios and Pamour: The Archaeological Context

Papyri associated with Makarios, Pamour, and their families derive from a block with three Roman houses in a section of the excavation labeled "Area A," which otherwise included a bath house and the two East Churches (see Figure 3). The other areas of the excavation also contained Roman period architecture. Area B, just north of these houses, included several large structures with a large number of connected rooms without easily recognizable functions. Within one of these structures stood a large colonnaded hall, a *columbarium* (or dovecote), and a Roman villa with painted decorations. Area C, on the most eastern side of the excavation, comprised a number of residential units and a section where light industrial activities took place. Area D, on the west side, included the Main Temple of Tutu with several shrines, the West Temple, the West Church, the West Tombs, and a few other structures. The village was flanked by a series of interconnected tombs that stretched from the north side of the village, via the West Tombs, to the southern side on the alluvial terrace. Two large

16 On the large estates and the relation between city and village see R.S. Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 315–16. The estate behind the KAB was led by representatives of Faustianus son of Aquila, who might have been related to the former magistrate of Mothis and *defensor civitatis* of the Mothite nome (mentioned in P.Kellis I Gr. 21, 321 CE). Bagnall, however, calls the identification of this magistrate with the landlord "most unlikely" and suggests he was the (grand)father of the landlord, who lived in Hibis (KAB 1146). Bagnall, *KAB*, 70.

17 Among the category of small hamlets or settlements the Kellis documents mention Thio (P.Kellis I Gr. 45), Pmoun Tametra (P.Kellis I Gr. 41), Pmoun Imouthou (twenty-one instances in the Kellis Agricultural Account book, KAB), Pmoun Tkele (KAB 1408) and many others. These toponyms starting with Pmoun ('the well') designated wells with small settlements. Examples include P.Kellis I Gr. 51 and 52 and O.Kellis 80, 81, 102, 103. On wells, see Bagnall and Ruffini, *Ostraka from Trimithis*, 31–37.

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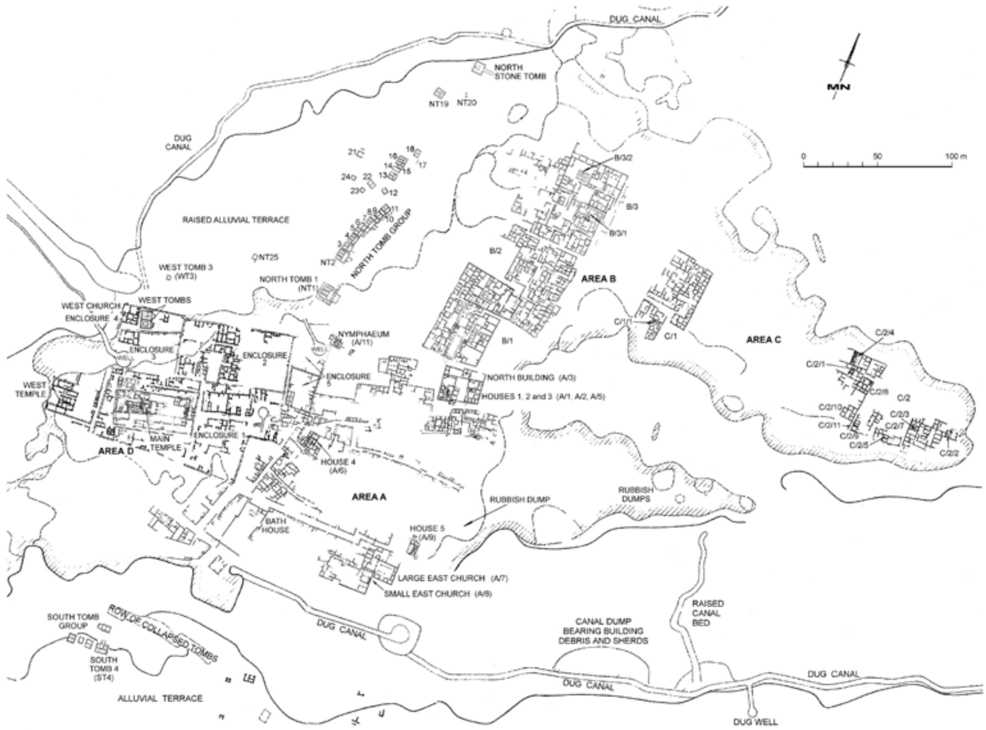

FIGURE 3 Map of the excavation of Kellis
COURTESY OF THE DAKHLEH OASIS PROJECT AND COLIN A. HOPE

cemeteries were unearthed farther north of the excavated areas: the East and West Cemeteries (see chapter 6).[18]

The wide array of archaeological and papyrological finds from Kellis offers many new opportunities for the study of everyday life during the later Roman Empire, and the village has already been called "a desert Pompeii" for its degree of preservation.[19] The excavations of the Roman houses 1–3 in Area A, which took place from 1986 until the early 1990s, unearthed large numbers of

18 Low-quality images of the site and excavation have been published online at https://www.monash.edu/arts/philosophical-historical-international-studies/ancient-kellis (accessed January 2021) and have been displayed at temporary exhibitions, published in O.E. Kaper and C. van Zoest, *Treasures of the Dakhleh Oasis: An Exhibition on the Occasion of the Fifth International Conference of the Dakhleh Oasis Project* (Cairo: The Netherlands-Flemish Institute in Cairo, 2006); C.A. Hope, *From the Sands of the Sahara: Ancient Kellis and Its Texts* (Clayton: Monash University, 1998).

19 H. Thurston, *Secrets of the Sands: The Revelations of Egypt's Everlasting Oasis* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 2003), 233–258 describing Kellis as a "desert Pompeii."

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inscribed materials. Among these materials were Manichaean liturgical documents, wooden tablets with psalms and prayers, and papyrus fragments of Mani's *Epistles*. These liturgical documents were found along with personal letters and business accounts of the houses' inhabitants. A careful reading of the papyri also shows connections between the liturgical Manichaean texts and the lives of particular individuals, effectively proving that some of the individuals and families were deeply engaged with Manichaean practices and ideas. The work of Iain Gardner, the main editor of the Coptic papyri, illuminates a tremendous wealth of new insight into this local version of Manichaeism. Upon abandoning their houses, the inhabitants of Kellis left enormous amounts of papyrus behind. These find locations, therefore, constitute the first setting in which the lives of Makarios, Pamour, and others should be contextualized.

The Houses 1–3 and the so-called North Building constituted a single mud-brick structure in the central residential area of Kellis. Streets on the north and south gave access to these mud-brick buildings (see Figure 4 for a plan of the houses). Occupation was mainly restricted to the fourth century, since all documents stemmed from 299–389 CE and coins and ceramics confirm domestic activity during the same period.[20] After this date, the inhabitants of Houses 1–3 seem to have abandoned their houses, as did their neighbors. Consequently, the buildings were only occupied for a few generations.[21] While extensive material was left behind, there were no remains indicating domestic activities with specific Manichaean connotations, apart from the extensive papyrological finds. The Manichaean affiliation of some of the inhabitants appears not to have affected most consumption habits – as far as they are possible to identify in the archaeological material.

House 3 was the largest of the four mud brick buildings. It had ten main rooms, which could be accessed through the entrance system.[22] The semi-circular wall in front of the entrance is an indication of the environmental challenges faced by the inhabitants, as it protected the house against the accumulation of sand. The courtyard at the north of the corridor contained animal mangers as well as facilities for cooking and storage. Most of the rooms were arranged around the central court from which most of the inscribed material derived. Since the majority of the surrounding rooms were barrel vaulted, and light entered only through the staircase into the central court and through the

20 C.A. Hope, "The Archaeological Context," in *Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis: Volume 1*, ed. I. Gardner, A. Alcock, and W.P. Funk (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999), 110–11 with the numismatic evidence analyzed by Gillian Bowen.

21 Hope, "The Roman-Period Houses," 215.

22 For the specific archaeological descriptions in these paragraphs, see Hope, "The Archaeological Context," 100. More recently, Hope, "The Roman-Period Houses," 199–229.

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FIGURE 4 Plan of Houses 1–3 and the North Building (Area A)
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windows in the north walls of two rooms, the house must have been a rather dark place. All of the rooms were furnished with wooden doors, of which only the bolts and sockets remain.[23] The remains of palm-rib shelves, found buried under the sand, and the remaining open niches attest to the internal decoration. The white-plastered area surrounding these cupboards may have facilitated some extra visibility in the gloom of oil lamps.[24]

23 Most of the portable wood was taken out of the house during its abandonment. A picture of a wooden key is included in C.A. Hope, "Dakhleh Oasis Project: Report on the 1987 Excavations at Ismant El-Gharab," *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* 16 (1986): plate IV, d.

24 G.E. Bowen, "The Environment Within: The Archaeological Context of the Texts from House 3 at Kellis in Egypt's Dakhleh Oasis," in *Housing and Habitat in the Ancient*

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FIGURE 5 Partial clearance of the floor deposit in room 6 of House 3
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Other walls were simply undecorated plastered mud, and were preserved up to 3.13 m at the highest point. The remains of the roof, which collapsed in antiquity, were found among the floor deposits, including the storage pottery that may have been kept on the roof (Figure 5). The other finds included small wooden objects, ceramics, textiles, glass, some coins, and evidence of tailoring.[25] Apart from such mundane objects, there was jewelry, fine worked glass, colorful imported curtains, and an intaglio ring with the motif of a centaur grappling with a stag.[26] This latter find is exceptional, as most valuable items seem to have been taken out of the house during the process of abandonment. Was it lost when the last generation of occupants left the house? Whatever happened exactly, its presence indicates a certain level of wealth, and the centaur motif suggests a profound engagement with Classical or Roman culture.

Mediterranean: Cultural and Environmental Responses, ed. A.A. Di Castro, C.A. Hope, and B.E. Parr (Leuven: Peeters, 2015), 232.

25 Hope, "The Archaeological Context," 103.

26 C.A. Hope, "The 1991 Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab in the Dakhleh Oasis," *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 2 (1991): 42. On the imported curtains, see R. Livingstone, "Household Furnishing Textiles (Soft Furnishings) from Kellis," in *Oasis Papers 9*, ed. G.E. Bowen and C.A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2019), 413.

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This confirms the general impression of the village as a place for well-to-do families and individuals.

The house next door, House 2, consisted of nine rooms in an L shape interlocking with House 1 and a large courtyard, which could only be accessed from the street. One room was added against the south wall and served as a kitchen. The entrance led to two central rooms that could be closed off with wooden doors. This spatial configuration suggests an organic development and inbuilding between the houses, without preconceived or externally controlled planning.[27] Through the central rooms, one could roam into three rectangular rooms, all decorated with niches and palm-rib shelves defined by white-plastered sections, and covered by barrel-vaulted roofs (Figure 6). The circulation of light and air was facilitated by openings above the doors of some of the rooms. Daylight, however, must have been minimal, because most openings to the outside had to be covered against the sand.[28] As in House 3, the central rooms were flat-roofed, supported by wooden beams with storage vessels placed on top.

House 1 comprised eleven rooms, divided into two blocks. The first block of rooms contained a kitchen with a brick oven and storage bin. Apart from this kitchen, the main living room also contained traces of a place for cooking: a circular hearth in front of room 5. This means that multiple families lived alongside each other. A second block of rooms was closer to the courtyard, which contained storage facilities and animal mangers. This section of the house could be closed off from the other rooms with a wooden door that stood near the entrance to the dining area. Modifications to the two mangers suggest that sheep or goats were initially kept there, but that eventually larger animals used the mangers, such as donkeys.[29] The large horseshoe-shaped structure with a raised platform located in the dining area is noteworthy; it was known as a *stibadium*, and was used for formal dining in the Roman world.[30] Just like in the other houses, most rooms in House 1 were barrel-vaulted and dark, with the exception of the dining area and courtyard, which were only partly covered.

27 On the organic nature of the inbuilding, see A.L. Boozer, "Towards an Archaeology of Household Relationships in Roman Egypt," in *Mediterranean Families in Antiquity: Households, Extended Families, and Domestic Space*, ed. S.R. Huebner and G. Nathan (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2017), 197 and 199 (with some minor misrepresentations based on older archaeological reports).

28 Hope, "The Roman-Period Houses," 219 refers to other sites with similar systems.

29 Hope, "The Roman-Period Houses," 218.

30 Hope, "The Roman-Period Houses," 217.

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FIGURE 6 The mud-brick walls with plastered niches of House 3 (room 6)
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The North Building, located to the north of these three houses, comprised a large open court with two rooms on each side. Some of these rooms may have had a domestic function, as they contained an oven, niches, and traces of painted decoration, which are otherwise not present in these houses.[31]

The most staggering find in all of these houses was the large amount of inscribed materials. Among the debris in the North Building, for example, were the fragmentary remains of a codex with text based on the *Acts of John* and a Manichaean psalm (P.Kellis VI Gr. 97).[32] Further fragments from this codex were found in Houses 1 and 3. Even though most inscribed objects were found in the early 1990s, so far not all of them have been published. Appendix 1 lists the published documents (with some exceptions) and can be used for preliminary statistical analysis. Tables 1 and 3 provide a preliminary impression of the type and number of documents found in House 3 (Area A) and House D/8 (Temple Area). These brief overviews highlight the exceptional nature of

31 Hope, "The Archaeological Context," 100. However, Kellis House 2 had walls covered in grey mud plaster, while the vault roofs had a red colored plaster, over which were painted grey bands along the junction between the vaults and the walls. C.A. Hope, "Three Seasons of Excavation at Ismant el-Kharab in Dakhleh Oasis, Egypt," *Mediterranean Archeology* 1 (1988): 169.

32 C.A. Hope, "The Archaeological Context of the Discovery of Leaves from a Manichaean Codex," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 117 (1997): 156–61.

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TABLE 1 Types of documents found in House 3

House 3 (Area A)
166 letters and administrative documents;
9 documents with (parts of) Manichaean Psalms;
3 documents with biblical content;
9 documents with amulets, spells, or astrological content;
8 documents with Manichaean content and/or Syriac writing;
4 documents unknown/other.

TABLE 2 Types of documents found in House D/8

House D/8 (Temple Area)
13 letters and administrative documents;
1 document with biblical content;
6 documents with amulets, spells, or astrological content;
1 document with Manichaean content.

the documents of House 3, many of which contain Manichaean content.[33] Other excavated fourth-century houses preserved noticeably less Manichaean material.

House 4 was located east of the temple gate, which provided excavators an opportunity to examine domestic structures in another section of the village (see Table 3 on the chronology). Although it comprised twenty-two rooms, it strongly resembled the architecture and finds of Houses 1–3. The papyrological finds included a wooden board with fragments of a Manichaean psalm and a devotional postscript (T.Kellis II Copt. 7). Interestingly, most of the other Coptic texts from House 4 were written in a modified southern version of Sahidic (P.Kellis VII Copt. 123, 124, 126, with the notable exception of 122). These Sahidic texts seem to correlate with non-Manichaean, Christian terminology (especially P.Kellis VII Copt. 124 and 126). Whether or not this linguistic correlation was characteristic of the socioreligious divisions in Late Antiquity

33 Psalm fragments have been found in rooms 4, 6, 7, 8, 9; the daily prayers in the backyard; a hymn of praise in room 9; fragments of Mani's *Epistles* were dispersed over House 3 but mainly from room 3 and 6; a devotional or theological text in room 11a.

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TABLE 3 Chronology of the domestic units in Kellis[a]

Residential areas	Indication chronology
Area C/2 units	(early) second century
Area C/1 units	second half third century
Area B units	early second century–third century
Roman Villa (B/3/1)	(early) second century
Temple area unit D/8	second half fourth century
Houses 1–5 (Area A)	fourth century

a These are general indications based on Hope, "The Roman-Period Houses," 199–229. The Area B and C units appear to have been inhabited during the second and third century, but may have been abandoned end of the third century. Ceramics from the fourth century indicate reuse as stable. On the size of the enclosures B/1 and B/3 see G.E. Bowen et al., "Brief Report on the 2007 Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab," *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 17 (2007): 29.

is yet to be addressed in full (see chapter 3).[34] How the Manichaean psalm in House 4 ended up so far from the find location of the other Manichaean psalms is unclear, but it is tied to some of the inhabitants through letter P.Kellis VII Copt. 122. This letter was found at the same location as the psalm, and both were written in the same Coptic language variant. The presence of marked religious language (in particular "whose name is sweet in my mouth" and a prayer for God's protection) suggests connections with the inhabitants of House 1–3.[35] If so, it would indicate the appeal of Manichaean texts beyond the immediate vicinity of Houses 1–3.

House 5, located next to the Large East Church, at a distance from Houses 1–3 and 4, yielded only a few inscribed materials, perhaps because it could only be partially excavated. The few Greek ostraca found in House 5 derived from the fourth century (O.Kellis 59, 86, 142), but no documents relating to Christian or

34 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 263–4 where they also suggest the wooden board was found near the surface and may not have belonged to the inhabitants of the building.

35 The letter contains no direct prosopographical connections to the other houses. P.Bingen 120, found in the same location, mentions a Pisistratos and a Gena. Could they have been associated with the associates of Pausanias in House 2 and 3? C.A. Hope, R.S. Bagnall and K.A. Worp, "Two 4th Century Accounts from Kellis," in *Papyri in Honorem Johannis Bingen Octogenarii*, ed. H. Melaerts (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 495–509.

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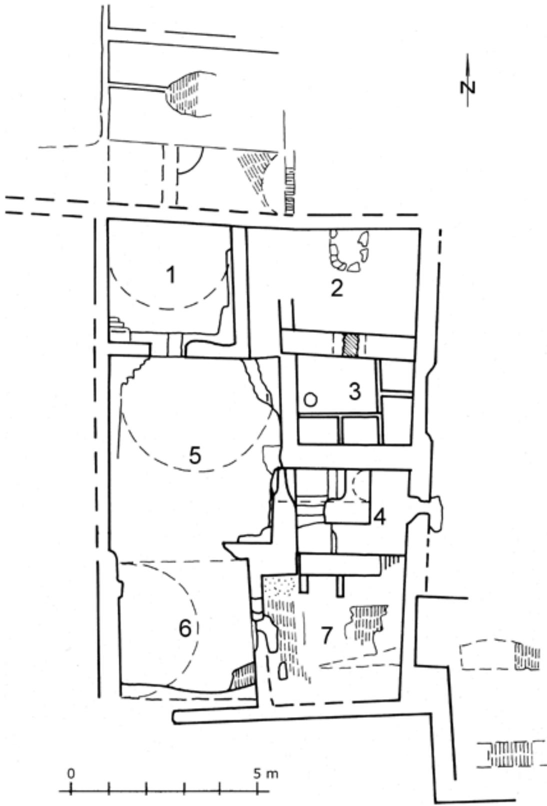

FIGURE 7 Plan of House 5 (Area A)
COURTESY OF THE DAKHLEH OASIS PROJECT AND COLIN A. HOPE

Manichaean communities were found.[36] Apart from the Houses 1–5 in Area A, other residential units from earlier periods were excavated by the Dakhleh Oasis Project, including a Roman peristyle house (labeled B/1/2) and the so-called Roman Villa (B/3/1). Finds from the fourth century were attested in House D/8, in the northwest corner of the Main Temple's *temenos*. Just like the other fourth-century houses, this unit yielded large quantities of inscribed material, including a horoscope for the year 392 CE.[37] Among these finds is a

36 C.A. Hope (with contributions by O.E. Kaper and H. Whitehouse), "The Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab from 2000 to 2002," in *Oasis Papers 3*, ed. G.E. Bowen and C.A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003), 238.

37 Hope, "The Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab from 2000 to 2002," 234.

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FIGURE 8 Plan of House D/8
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fragment with Syriac writing and a reference to the *Apostolos* in a personal letter (P.Kellis VII Copt. 127, compare P.Kellis II Syr. 1 and P.Kellis II Syr./Gr. 1). The attestation of a papyrus with Psalm 9 (LXX) in D/8 can be explained within a Christian as well as a Manichaean context.[38]

Detailed attention to the architecture and archaeology of the various Roman period houses is of importance to locate Makarios, Pamour, and their families within the village. But did they actually live there? At least one scholar has suggested that the large number of papyri found in House 3 indicates that the rooms were used as rubbish dumps for the city's garbage.[39] She is hardly the only one wondering how to relate the prolific textual finds to the modest architecture of the find location. The editors of both the Greek and the Coptic documents have speculated about the house being a "storage place" during the

38 K.A. Worp, "Psalm 9.22–26 in a 4th-Century Papyrus from the Western Desert in Egypt," *Vetus Testamentum* 66, no. 3 (2016): 1–6. His argument about the Manichaean rejection of the Old Testament psalms is problematic, see Pedersen et al., *The Old Testament in Manichaean Tradition*, xv, xxxviii–xxxix.

39 L. Nevett, "Family and the Household, Ancient History and Archeology: A Case Study from Roman Egypt," in *A Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman Worlds*, ed. B. Rawson (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 22–23.

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last phase of the village's occupational history.[40] If they are correct, it would be impossible to relate the families to the material setting of the specific houses.

Fortunately, there are good reasons to closely associate the documents with the domestic settings in which they were found. First, the majority of the papyri were found together with the remains of large ceramic jars in the debris of the roof collapse (in particular in House 3, rooms 8, 9, and 10). The best explanation is, therefore, that papyrus archives were kept in jars and stored on the roof. When the house was abandoned, the collection of jars on the roof was forgotten and subsequently tumbled down with the collapse of the roof. Environmental factors, such as wind or nesting rats, led to a wider distribution of the fragments over the various rooms in the house(s).[41] Second, the clustering of one author's (or family's) letters at a single find location indicates that the archives may have been kept together. This was the case for Petros's letters, and several letters from Pamour's family were even kept in a single jar. Some of Orion's letters were kept together in one room (or on the roof), while an adjacent room contained one other fragment of his letters (see Appendix 1). Most of the letters associated with Makarios derived from a single find location in House 3.[42] This clustering suggests that these letters were kept together, and not gradually disposed of throughout a longer period. Even though many questions remain, it is possible that the last residents forgot about the documents left on the roof, or did not consider them valuable enough to take with them when they moved away.[43]

A final argument for the close relation between the physical find location and the content of the letters stems from the minor archaeological finds. We not only encounter individual villagers in their papyrus correspondences, but we can also trace their lives in the material culture of their houses. Two

40 Worp, *GPK1*, 52; Gardner, *KLT1*, ix.

41 Bowen, "The Environment Within," 231–41. Among the exceptions are the papyri found in the North Building, which may have been thrown away and reused as filling in the construction of animal mangers next door (i.e., the text based on the *Acts of John*). Hope, "The Archaeological Context of the Discovery of Leaves from a Manichaean Codex," 160–1.

42 With an exception found in room 3 instead of room 6. Hope, "The Archaeological Context," 108 and table 4 on page 20.

43 One of the questions is why the wooden boards with psalms and prayers were left, rather than reused or taken along. A comparable study of the disposal of Christian liturgical manuscripts at Oxyrhynchus suggests that ancient individuals and communities had less scruples about discarding biblical manuscripts than we would sometimes expect. A. Luijendijk, "Sacred Scriptures as Trash: Biblical Papyri from Oxyrhynchus," *Vigiliae Christianae* 64, no. 3 (2010): 217.

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examples may illustrate how these rich sources overlap and offer additional information on the lives of the inhabitants: the carpentry in House 2 and the textile production in Houses 1–3.

A number of wooden codices were found in House 2, one containing the text of Isocrates's orations and another an account book of a large local estate. These codices were produced locally, maybe even within the house, as pieces of acacia wood at various stages of production indicate. Carpenter's tools were found in a small box, along with wooden spindle whorls, a ceramic lamp, two fragments of inscribed wooden boards, and more fragments of worked acacia wood (the same material was used for the two large codices).[44] Apart from wooden codices and woodworking tools, there is papyrological evidence of carpenters in House 2. In documents from the 330s–350s CE, a carpenter named Gena acts as an agent for Pausanias, a former magistrate of the capital of the oasis at Mothis (P.Kellis I Gr. 4–7). A second group of documents belonged to the family of the carpenter Tithoes (P.Kellis I Gr. 8–12 and P.Kellis V Copt. 12, from the second half of the fourth century). Finally, there is a letter in House 3 with a request for a "well-proportioned and nicely executed ten-page notebook."[45] It is not impossible that this request was aimed at one of the carpenters next door. As many of the Manichaean liturgical documents were written on wood, the connection to the neighbors must have been excellent, even though we cannot directly connect the wooden codices to one of the carpenters known by name.

Material and papyrological evidence for weaving is also abundant. Fragments of textiles were found in almost every room, and textile production and trade is mentioned frequently in the letters. Weaving was without question part and parcel of the lives of Kellites, for some as a domestic activity, but for many also as a source of income. A wooden comb was found in front of the entrance of House 2, as were loom weights and cotton fibers.[46] Several holes in the walls of Houses 1–3 have been identified as gaps for warping frames, and the remains of wooden wall fittings were found at the door of room 4 in

44 For the entire paragraph see Colin Hope's notes in Bagnall, *KAB*, 9; J. Whitehorne, "The Kellis Writing Tablets: Their Manufacture and Use," in *Archaeological Research in Roman Egypt: The Proceedings of the Seventeenth Classical Colloquium of the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, British Museum, Held on 1–4 December 1993*, ed. D.M. Bailey (Ann Arbor: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 1996), 240–45.

45 Πινακίδιον εὔμετρον καὶ ἀστῖον δέκα πτυχῶν πέμψον P.Kellis I Gr. 67.17–19.

46 More large loom weights were found in Area C, indicating that weaving was also an important feature of the activities in this region (structure C/2/1). K. Hickson, "Excavations in Area C at Ismant el-Kharab in 1996–1997," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994–1995 to 1998–1999 Field Seasons*, ed. C.A. Hope and G.E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002), 165.

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House 1, which may have served a similar purpose.[47] Papyrological evidence for domestic weaving is found in the countless requests for pieces of clothing. One of the letters, for example, refers to a *sticharion* (a shirt or a tunic) and a *kolobion* (sleeveless tunic); the author orders, "Tailor it for a cowl. Provide warp for it," and "Take it and see whether it is possible to dye it."[48] Some of these requests reveal a more professional approach. One of the business accounts found in House 3 reveals that the author hired two female weavers (P.Kellis V Copt. 44.5–6, see also the enslaved female weavers in P.Kellis I Gr. 19a.8–11).[49] The KAB refers to a weaving workshop (KAB 1266), and one of the children of House 2 was sent to a monastery to learn the "linen weaving trade" as a profession (P.Kellis I Gr. 12.21).[50] This combination of archaeological and papyrological evidence for textile production confirms the earlier impressions pertaining to carpentry: the content of the letters is connected to their specific find locations. Archaeology and papyrology, in this case, provide two windows into the daily lives of the inhabitants of the Roman period houses.

Makarios and Maria

The Makarios archive, found in House 3, has sparked considerable interest because of its Manichaean tone and content. It consists of eleven Coptic letters, the individuals in which have strong prosopographical connections to many other inhabitants of Kellis – relatives, neighbors, and other acquaintances.[51] Some of the letters refer to Manichaean books, and others employ uncom-

47 Hope, "Three Seasons of Excavation," 168.

48 … ⲥⲙ̄ⲛⲧⲥ̄ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲕⲗⲉϥⲧ̀ ϯ ϣϯⲧ ϩⲁⲣⲁⲥ ⲉⲓⲥ ⲕⲁⲕⲉⲗⲟⲃⲓ .. and.. ϫⲓⲧϥ̄ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲧⲛⲛⲟ ϫⲉ ⲟⲩⲛ ϣϭⲁⲙ ⲛ̄ϯ ϫⲏ̣ϭⲉ ⲁⲣⲁ̣[ϥ.… P.Kellis V Copt. 18.6–9.

49 On this text, see the new edition and commentary in M. Bergamasco, "P.Kell.G. 19.A, Appendix," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 121 (1998): 193–96. In one of the second-century census returns from Kellis a woman is self-identified as "spinner." R.S. Bagnall, K.A. Worp, and C.A. Hope, "Family Papers from Second-Century A.D. Kellis," *Chronique d'Égypte* 86 (2011): 234; G.E. Bowen, "Texts and Textiles: A Study of the Textile Industry at Ancient Kellis," *Artefact* 24 (2002): 18–28.

50 The passage in P.Kellis I Gr. 12.21 is largely reconstructed: λινου- [φικὴν which presupposes a word like τέχνην, according to the editor. Worp, *GPK1*, 38. On textiles in the oasis, see also the evidence from Trimithis House B2, see A.L. Boozer, "Woven Material," in *A Late Romano-Egyptian House in the Dakhla Oasis/Amheida House B2*, ed. A.L. Boozer (New York: New York University Press/Ancient World Digital Library, 2015), 397–404.

51 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 4–5, passim. Archive is used in the sense of a collection of papers brought together in antiquity. The terminology and distinction with "dossiers" is contested. K. Vandorpe, "Archives and Dossiers," in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, ed. R.S. Bagnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 216–55.

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mon phrases that connote intimate knowledge of Manichaean cosmology. Fundamentally, therefore, these letters show what I will call a *family religion group style* combined with an *itinerancy group style*; the Manichaeans were connected to relatives, neighbors, and coworkers in the oasis and the Nile valley.

Most of the eleven letters in this archive were written by Makarios and his sons Matthaios and Piene (see Table 5 at the end of this chapter). Their letters all address one woman: Maria, the unquestioned matriarch, wife of Makarios, and mother of Matthaios and Piene. She stayed in Kellis and kept in contact with those who left the oasis for long or short periods. Other family relationships are more difficult to determine with certainty, and the editors warn that even in the aforementioned reconstruction, the family relationships "may not be as simple as it might at first appear."[52]

The reconstruction of this family unit is built on the assumption of a certain level of consistency in the way people addressed each other.[53] Makarios's letters address his "son" Matthaios (P.Kellis v Copt. 19), and Matthaios writes to his "mother" Maria (P.Kellis v Copt. 25, 26). Piene also addresses his "mother" Maria (P.Kellis v Copt. 29) and is mentioned several times by the others as either "son" or "brother." Makarios writes to "my sister Maria" (P.Kellis v Copt. 20, 21, 22, 24), a common way of addressing a spouse in Late Antiquity. Together, these references build a consistent picture from different angles.[54]

Kinship terminology was not exclusively used for family members. In Matthaios's letter to his "mother" Maria, he greets six women as "my mother."[55] Not all of these women could have been core family. As a rule of thumb, Gardner noticed that "brother" and "sister" were used for people on the same generational level, while "mother" and "father" generally referred to respected older individuals.[56] Matthaios's six mothers, then, must have been aunts and

52 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 154.

53 On kinship terminology see E. Dickey, "Literal and Extended Use of Kinship Terms in Documentary Papyri," *Mnemosyne* 57, no. 2 (2004): 131–76; E. Dickey, "Forms of Address and Markers of Status," in *A Companion to the Ancient Greek Language*, ed. E.J. Bakker (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 327–37; I. Gardner, "Some Comments on Kinship Terms in the Coptic Documentary Papyri from Ismant el-Kharab," in *Oasis Papers 2*, ed. M.F. Wiseman (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2008), 129–36.

54 Gardner, "Some Comments on Kinship Terms," 132. The variant spellings, Matheos, Mathaios, and Matthaios, referred to one individual. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 154n204. See also J.D. Dubois, "Vivre dans la communauté manichéenne de Kellis: une lettre de Makarios, le papyrus Kell. Copt. 22," in *Pensée grecque et sagesse d'Orient: Hommage a Michel Tardieu*, ed. M.A.A. Moezzi, et al. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009), 203–10.

55 Gardner, "Some Comments on Kinship Terms," 134.

56 In P.Kellis v Copt. 19, Makarios writes to "sister" Maria, "sister" Charis, and "son" Matthaios. At the end of the same letter, Gena, who is traveling with him, adds his own greetings to

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respected women from the generation of his parents. Figure 9 depicts the family relationships, reconstructed by cross-examining other letters with similar tentative kinship indications. The most securely reconstructed relations are represented with a solid line and the more speculative ones with dotted lines.

Makarios and Maria must be placed within the second half of the fourth century, based on a dated Greek contract.[57] The younger generation, among whom were Pamour, Pegosh, and Psais, occasionally use the greeting "mother Maria" in letters from the 360s (P.Kellis I Gr. 71), and are greeted as "son(s)" by Makarios (P.Kellis V Copt. 24).[58] The contemporaries Tehat and Hatre (P.Kellis V Copt. 43, 50), Lysimachos (P.Kellis V Copt. 30, P.Kellis I Gr. 67), and Orion (P.Kellis V Copt. 15–18) appear in several letters of this period. Some of them remain active during the next decades. Other cross-references could be made with Pshempnoute and Kyria, who are addressed in Makarios's letters, but also appear in Tithoes's correspondence with his son Shamoun in the early 360s.[59] After this time, there are no references to Makarios and Maria anymore, but the names of Pamour and Pegosh continue to appear until the late 380s (P.Kellis I Gr. 44).

How exactly Makarios and Maria were related to Pamour, Pegosh, and Psais is unknown, but Pamour's wife Maria frequently greets "my mother Maria" and mentions "my daughter Tsemnouthes" (P.Kellis I Gr. 71 and P.Kellis VII Copt. 65, see the appendix). It has been suggested that Maria's daughter Tsemnouthes (or Jemnoute) may have stayed with her grandmother Maria in Kellis. If so, it would allow us to tie Makarios and Pamour together. It is, however, remarkable that "daughter" Maria is never mentioned in Makarios's letters.[60] If Pamour was Makarios's son-in-law, one would expect stronger expressions of connection. Regardless, they must have known each other quite well, as they lived and worked in the same social circles and shared a Manichaean background – as becomes apparent in a number of their letters.

"mother" Maria, "mother" Charis, and "brother" Matthaios. Even if nothing else is known about Gena's relations to them, his choice of words reveals he is on the same generational level as Matthaios. Gardner has posed four propositions regarding the usage of family language (*immediate family, extended family, respected position, religious authority*) and concludes that little can be taken for certain. Gardner, "Some Comments on Kinship Terms," 134.

57 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 11 and 56.

58 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 11.

59 P.Kellis I Gr. 8–12 and P.Kellis V Copt. 12, one of which is firmly dated in the year 362 CE. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 55.

60 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 52. If so, it is remarkable to see no connection to Makarios, who did greet his daughter Tsempnouthes at least once.

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Most of these interactions in the papyrus letters inform us about those outside the oasis. They were written by traveling family members and their associates who wanted to inform the home front about their well-being. Distress about the absence of family news or material support is frequently expressed at length and without restraint, as exemplified by Makarios's irritations at the outset of this chapter. Most voices in the letters speak of the anxieties of itinerant life. These fears and hopes are strongly connected to the well-being of those in Kellis, and give us glimpses into the situation in the oasis itself.

The papyrus correspondence also offers insights into the family's financial situation, in which Maria played a central role. When Makarios was traveling in the Nile valley, Maria had to raise money for the journey of her son Matthaios. She even had to sell her loom to be able to cover the cost.[61] It appears, moreover, that Makarios had suffered financial losses in one of the previous years and asks Maria (or Gena?) to "count the fare to me," assuring her that he would repay the entire amount later after having received some other money.[62] In another letter, Makarios expresses his discontent about Ammon approaching Maria for his wages (P.Kellis v Copt. 22.25–40); surely Makarios had tended to the matter himself in the Nile valley! Even though Makarios often complains about Maria's failure to answer his letters and he hardly seems to receive the goods she has sent, their financial position never seems at risk. On the contrary, the list of commodities sent back and forth from the oasis indicates they had a comfortable, wealthy position within the oasis's society.[63]

Textiles are a main subject in Makarios's letters. Apart from occasional references to clothing for himself and his boys, Makarios mentions threads, dye, and cushions frequently. On one occasion, he expresses his distress about moths affecting the threads and cushion (P.Kellis v Copt. 24.6), which was meant for

61 ⲉⲃⲁⲗ ⲉⲓϣⲭ̣ⲉ̣ ⲧⲉⲣⲭⲣⲓⲁ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁϥ ⲉⲛ ⲛ̄ϩⲟⲩⲟ ⲧⲉⲉ[ϥ] ⲁ̣ⲧ̣ϩⲏⲙⲁ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲑⲉⲟⲥ … P.Kellis v Copt. 19.31–32, I consider "if you have no more need of it" to refer to the remainder of the money instead of to the loom itself.

62 [ⲉⲓϣⲱⲡⲉ] ⲁⲛ ⲉϩⲁⲥⲙⲛ̣̄ⲧⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲏⲉⲓ ⲉⲡ̄ ⲧ̣ϩⲏⲙⲁ ⲁⲣⲁⲉⲓ ϫⲉ ⲧⲉⲥ̣ … ⲉⲩϣⲁⲛϯ ⲛⲏⲓ ⲁⲛ ⲛ̄ϯⲙⲁϩ ⲧϩⲏⲙⲁ ⲧⲏⲣⲥ̄ ⲡⲕⲉ̣ⲥ̣ⲉⲉ̣ⲡ̣ⲉ̣ … P.Kellis v Copt. 19.36–37 and 39. See observations in J.S. Moss, "Women in Late Antique Egypt," in *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World*, ed. S.L. James and S. Dillon (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 510–11.

63 A position that is different from the individuals of House B2 at Trimithis, described by Giovanni Ruffini. Their documents suggest they came from the lower social strata of Trimithis, mainly active as middle-men in transportation, manual labor and the production of clothing. G. Ruffini, "Transport and Trade in Trimithis. The Texts from Area 1," in *A Late Romano-Egyptian House in the Dakhla Oasis/Amheida House B2*, ed. A.L. Boozer (New York: New York University Press/Ancient World Digital Library, 2015), 353–368.

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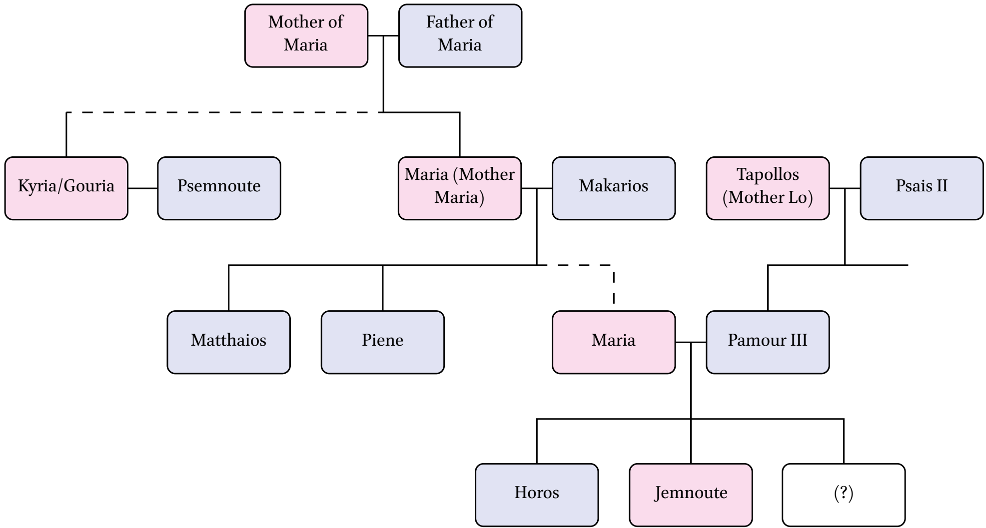

FIGURE 9 Reconstruction of Makarios's family relations
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sale in the valley. Makarios's son Matthaios reports that he received the cloth bag (ϫⲏⲗϭⲉ) from Hatre and that Pamour sold the tunic (*sticharion*), a garment Matthaios himself did not inspect for its quality (P.Kellis V Copt. 26.14–16).[64] From these indications, we learn that Makarios and his sons earned money within the textile trade, just like many other Kellites who profited from the agricultural surplus of the oasis's double harvest season for cotton.[65] Apart

64 On this type of tunic, see J. Cromwell, "Domestic Textile Production in Dakhleh Oasis in the Fourth Century AD," in *Egyptian Textiles and Their Production: 'Word' and 'Object'*, ed. M. Mossakowska-Gaubert (Lincoln, NE: Zea Books, 2020), 142–3 with a very helpful vocabulary list of the textile industry in Kellis.

65 Roger Bagnall has identified the two main strategies behind the flourishing economy. First, many crops were grown for local consumption and second, value crops like olive oil, cotton, dates, figs, and jujubes were exported to the Nile valley to create a surplus. Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 149–52 (Bagnall). Cotton played a crucial role. Even though it is not priminent in the KAB (547, 556,558–59, 720 and 1484), it is recorded in the ostraca from the oases. For example, from Kellis: O.Kellis 68 and 69, Trimithis: O.Trim.I. 38 and 44, Dush: O.Douch. 1.51, 4.381, 5.537, 5.634. For cotton production see R.S. Bagnall, "SB 6.9025, Cotton, and the Economy of the Small Oasis," *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 45 (2008): 21–30. Cotton has been identified by infrared light, see C.E. Coombs, A.L. Woodhead, and J.S. Church, "Report on the Characterization of Three

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from cotton and millet, olive oil and wine contributed to the wealth of the oases.[66] The transportation of these commodities to the Nile valley and the local production of textiles from cotton and wool presented two flourishing economic sectors in which many inhabitants of Kellis participated. Additional light industry such as metalworking and carpentry offered other opportunities for non-agricultural workers, craftspeople, artisans, and traders to build on this layer of agricultural wealth.[67] Trade in garments and semifinished products at the markets of the Nile valley provided the profitable business background to many of the Kellis letters, and placed the authors in a relatively well-off section of society.

Pamour and His Brothers

A second set of Greek and Coptic letters stem from a single family across three to four generations. Most of these letters were written by, or addressed to, three brothers: the earlier mentioned Pamour, Pegosh, and Psais. The reconstruction of the social relations behind this archive is hampered by frequently recurring names. A large number of papyri relate to descendants of Pamour I (early fourth century), among whom at least two other men were named Pamour.[68]

Fabric Samples from Ismant el-Kharab," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994–1995 to 1998–1999 Field Seasons*, ed. C.A. Hope and G.E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002), 115–19. Moreover, it has been found at the site as cotton bolls and seeds, see U. Thanheiser (with contributions by J. Walter and C.A. Hope), "Roman Agriculture and Gardening in Egypt as Seen from Kellis," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994–1995 to 1998–1999 Field Seasons*, ed. C.A. Hope and G.E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002), 299–310.

66 Bagnall, *KAB*, 45, 56. cf. Wagner, *Les oasis d'Égypte*, 116 and 299–300. The location of the agricultural fields is not precisely known, but modern agriculture takes place on the west-southwest side of the village. Most of the wells and irrigation channels do not date back to antiquity. Knudstad and Frey, "Kellis: The Architectural Survey," 189.

67 In Area C, a pottery workshop (C/2/4) was located, with large stage bins, kilns, and unfired ceramics in the immediate surroundings. C.A. Hope (with an appendix by G.E. Bowen), "Excavations in the Settlement of Ismant el-Kharab in 1995–1999," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994–1995 to 1998–1999 Field Seasons*, ed. C.A. Hope and G.E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002), 176. Several of the other units showed evidence for light-industrial activities, like the blacksmith at C/2/7, where layers with iron slag were found on the surface. The remains of glass-slag suggest the presence of glass industry in this section of the city. C.A. Hope, "The Excavation at Ismant el-Kharab in 1998/9: A Brief Report," *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 10 (1999): 65.

68 Worp, *GPK1*, 51.

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Utilizing Klaas Worp's reconstruction of the family, I will demarcate the various individuals with Roman numbers. Figure 10 visualizes the family relations of Pamour III and includes all novel insights from the Greek and Coptic papyri (the cluster of associated documents is listed in Table 6 at the end of this chapter).

Pamour III was the husband of Maria, not to be confused with the spouse of Makarios. He had two brothers called Pegosh (Pekysis in Greek) and Psais III, and all were sons of Psais II and Tapollos. Their only (?) sister Tagoshe (Tekysis in Greek) was married to Kapiton the son of Kapiton (P.Kellis I Gr. 45 and 76). For a long time Tagoshe's husband participated in the three brothers' business, and he added postscripts addressed to his wife to the letters of Pegosh.[69] After a while, however, they went separate ways, as Pegosh declares in a Greek document that he did not know whether Kapiton was still alive and had "nothing in common with him in any respect."[70] When exactly he broke away from his wife and brothers-in-law is not known, but there is a loan of money on his name, or the name of his son, from 386 CE (P.Kellis I Gr. 45).[71] As Kapiton's example indicates, it is possible to reconstruct the family's personal networks with some certainty, mostly because their letters include extensive sections with greetings to family and acquaintances.

The brothers Pamour III, Pegosh, and Psais belonged to the same affluent merchant network. Just like Makarios, they were involved in textile production and trade. A Greek letter written by Psais son of Tryphanes discusses some business agreements with Pamour:

> [L]ook now, I have sent you my son Tryphanes with (?) my goods in order that you make an effort and together with him bring together … and if you spend ten or twenty days together with him, while you are selling my goods, I am prepared to give you your salary in the meantime.[72]

69 See his postscript in Pegosh's letter P.Kellis VII Copt. 75.37 to Tagoshe and his letter to her in P.Kellis VII Copt. 109.

70 μηδὲν κοινὸν ἔχοντα πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐν οὐδένι. P.Kellis I Gr. 76.29–30. Translation as given in the notes of Worp, *GPK1*, 199.

71 I follow the editors of the Coptic material in their interpretation of this loan as to the son of Kapiton, returned to the Dakhleh Oasis and residing in the hamlet Thio. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 100. *Contra* the family tree depicted in Worp, *GPK1*, 52. The date in the 380s, on the other hand, would not require a new generation, since Pegosh's latest dated occurrence is in a document from 382 CE.

72 ἰδοὺ οὖν, ἀπέστειλά σοι τὸν υἱόν μου Τρυφάνην μετὰ τὰ̣ εἴδη μου, ἵνα ποιήσῃς τὴν σπουδὴν κ̣α̣ὶ̣ συνάγεις μετ' αὐτοῦ – – – – – – – – – – – –[–ca.?–]μ̣ου καὶ π̣ρ̣ι̣[.....]-κα μετ' αὐτοῦ ἐν κ̣α̣λ̣[...].

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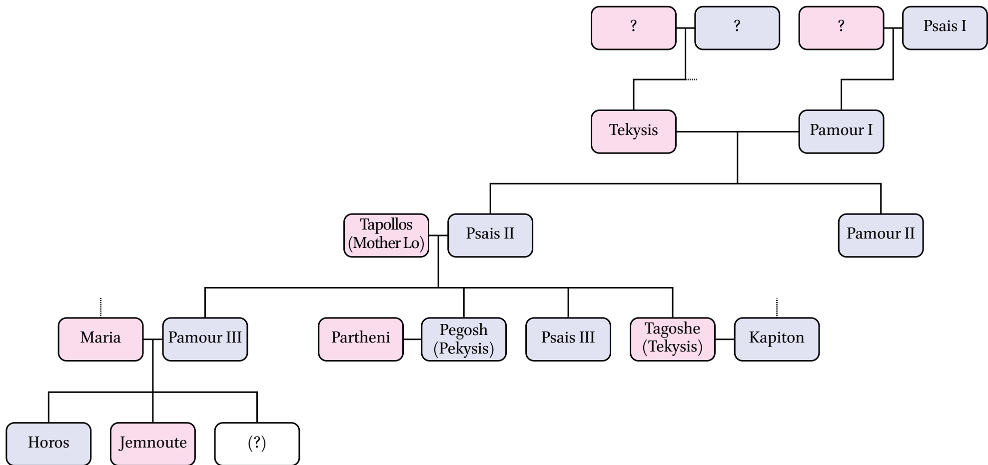

FIGURE 10 Section of Pamour's reconstructed family relations
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To gain profit from the agricultural wealth of the oasis, these people traveled extensively to sell their commodities elsewhere in Egypt. Tryphanes traveled with Pamour III to sell the goods of his father Psais. These goods must have included garments, dye, and wool, as they are mentioned at the verso of the letter (P.Kellis I Gr. 72).[73] The other letters by Pamour III and his brothers frequently concern business arrangements. In the Greek letter on the verso, Pegosh asks his brother Pamour for "nicely colored wool" and questions him about his failure to send the purple dye (P.Kellis I Gr. 72). Kapiton, who was still traveling with Pegosh at the time, writes to his wife, asking her to cut the wool he had sent and make a tunic, which needed to be returned along with Pegosh's belongings (P.Kellis VII Copt. 75; wool is also sent to Kellis for the production of garments in P.Kellis VII Copt. 78 and 79). This indicates a constant process of sending commodities to the oasis to be spun, dyed, and made into beautiful garments to be sold at the markets in the Nile valley.[74] Fabrics found

.μη καί, ἐὰν ποιήσῃς δέκα ἡμέρας ἢ εἴκοσι μετ' αὐτοῦ ἕως πιπράσκεις τὰ εἴδη μου, ἑτοίμως ἔχω παρασχεῖν σοι τὸν μισθόν σου τέως. P.Kellis I Gr. 73.8–20.

73 Since Psais Tryphanes is greeted in P.Kellis VII Copt 78, which also includes marked Manichaean language, it is possible that he also self-identified as a Manichaean catechumen.

74 Wool is not mentioned in the KAB and is absent from the bio–archaeological remains. C.S. Churcher, "Faunal Remains from Kellis," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994–1995 to 1998–1999 Field Seasons*, ed. C.A. Hope and G.E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002), 105–13. See however, Cromwell, "Domestic Textile Production,"

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in the archaeological remains of the village were mostly made locally, but a few seem to have been imported.[75] This dynamic trade between the oasis and the Nile valley also resulted in distress, especially when oasis products were not accepted, as for example, when low-quality wool was used in the production of blankets (P.Kellis VII Copt. 76, cf. the situation of Matthaios in P.Kellis V Copt. 26.14–16).

Apart from their involvement in textile production and trade, the family owned olive orchards, and maybe also jujube trees.[76] In one of the letters, Philammon entrusts Tekysis with rent collection on leased orchard land, and requests that the money and oil be sent to the Nile valley (P.Kellis I Gr. 65, cf. P.Kellis I Gr. 45, 49, 80, 86 and P.Kellis VII Copt. 109). Most of the situations involving olives and olive oil, however, relate to the local situation in the oasis, rather than trade with the Nile valley (in fact, olives and oil were sometimes bought and sent to Kellis, P.Kellis V Copt. 22, 24, 43 and 44).

Several letters indicate that Pamour III, Psais III, and Pegosh collaborated with relatives and other associates under direct supervision of their father, even when the latter was of old age. Pamour III's relation to his father is characterized by a strong sense of obligation, which resulted in some tense situations. To see Psais II in action in the 360s, when he was probably well into his sixties, is exceptional, because many children lost their parents at a young age.[77] As an elderly figure in the household, he is frequently greeted by his younger relatives in their letters.[78] More importantly, we get the impression from the letters of Pamour and Pegosh that they continue to seek his counsel. In a fascinating correspondence about the fate of two orphaned girls, Pegosh seeks counsel from his brother Psais and asks not only for his opinion, but also for him to

143–45; Bowen, "Texts and Textiles," 18–28 suggests that wool was produced in the oasis. Could P.Kellis VII Copt. 58.20 have contained a request for "local" wool?

75 R.J. Livingstone, "Late Antique Household Textiles from the Village of Kellis in the Dakhleh Oasis," in *Clothing the House: Furnishing Textiles of the 1st Millennium from Egypt and Neighbouring Countries*, ed. A. de Moor and C. Fluck (Tielt: Lannoo Publishers, 2009), 84 mentions resist-dyed cottons and the taquete textiles.

76 P.Kellis V Copt. 21, 22 and P.Kellis VII Copt. 65 and 77.

77 S. Huebner, *The Family in Roman Egypt: A Comparative Approach to Intergenerational Solidarity and Conflict*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 73 refers to 15.3 percent of the census returns belonging to three generation households. See also W. Scheidel, "The Demographic Background," in *Growing Up Fatherless in Antiquity*, ed. S.R. Huebner and D.M. Ratzan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 31–40 citing percentages of Roman urban areas with 28–37 percent of the individuals having lost their father at 15 and 49–61 by the age of 25.

78 References to "father Pshai," by Pamour and Maria are found in P.Kellis VII Copt. 64, 65, 66, 67 (?), 70, 71 and 72.

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intervene in the decision-making process with their father: "'Will you persuade my father if you are content for me to do the thing?' And I myself am wondering whether you are persuaded?"[79] Likewise, in P.Kellis VII Copt. 77, Pegosh indicates to Kapiton that "father Shai" has given specific instructions about the issue at hand (P.Kellis VII Copt. 77.22, likewise in P.Kellis VII Copt. 82.20 written by Philammon).

Their father's continuing presence led to tension between the brothers. A good example, though hard to reconstruct in detail, is Pamour's letter to his brother Psais, requesting particular items. The letter reveals that Pamour had corresponded with their father about the issue at hand, but ended up writing to his brother. It appears that some items were sold, including a copper vessel (?), and Pamour complains that he was excluded, "so that I would receive nothing from him [i.e. Psais II]" (P.Kellis VII Copt. 64.7–9). Had Pamour lost his father's favor? If so, he tells his brother "do not let any complication occur among us," stressing that he is "only seeking what is ours" (P.Kellis VII Copt. 64.3–4, 8–9), and he renounces all claims on the items from which he was allegedly excluded.[80] A related issue features in a letter between Pamour and Pegosh concerning a disagreement (?) about property. Pamour writes, "Every item we have, between us mutually on account of our father, whether of bronze or all that is ours, you are its owner."[81] As in the previous example, Pamour did not seek conflict over the property, but confirms Pegosh's ownership rights. Maybe he had moved to the Nile valley by this time, while Pegosh stayed in the oasis?

Since traveling was part of the occupational practice of Pamour III and his relatives, it is unsurprising to see that he took up residence in Aphrodite in the Nile valley (Antaiopolite nome). Along with Maria, he continued to correspond with their relatives in the oasis. Since a Greek document related to the inheritance of their son Horos is dated May 363 CE, all of their correspondence letters must have been sent before that time (P.Kellis I Gr. 30). During and after this period, a number of Kellites are registered in Greek contracts

79 ⲁϊⲥϩⲉⲓ ⲛⲉϥ ϫⲉ ⲕⲛⲁⲡⲓⲑⲉ ⲙⲡⲁ̣ϊ̣ⲱⲧ ϊϣϫⲉ ⲕ̣ⲏ̣ⲕ ⲛϩⲏⲧ ⲧⲁⲡϩⲱⲃ ⲁⲩⲱ ϯⲙ̣ⲁ̣ⲓ̣ϩⲉ ϩⲱ̣ⲧ̣ ϫ[ⲉ] ⲕⲡⲓⲑⲉ.. P.Kellis VII Copt. 73.13–15.

80 ..ⲙ̄ⲡⲱⲣⲧ̣ⲉ ϩⲗⲁⲙ[ⲗ]ⲉⲙ ϣⲱⲡⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ⲉⲣⲏⲩ ..ϣⲁⲛⲉⲧ ϫⲉ ⲛⲓϫⲓ ⲗⲁⲩⲉ ϩⲁⲣⲁϥ· ϩⲓⲉ ⲧⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲏⲧ̣ⲉ̣ [ⲁ]ⲣⲁⲩ· ⲉⲛϣ̣ⲓⲛⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙⲉ̣ⲧ̣ⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥⲁ ⲡⲉⲧⲉⲡⲱ̣ⲛ̣· P.Kellis VII Copt. 64.3–4, 7–9.

81 ..ϫⲉ ϩⲛ̣ⲟ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲉ̣ϥϣⲟⲡ̀ ⲛⲉⲛ· ⲉϥⲟⲩⲧⲱⲛ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛ[ⲉ]ⲛⲉⲣⲏⲩ ϩⲁ ⲡⲛ̄ⲓ̈ⲱⲧ· ⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ϩⲛⲟ ⲛ̄ϩⲁⲙⲧ̀. ⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲡⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲛ ⲧⲏⲣϥ̄· ⲕⲟ̂ ⲙ̄ⲡϥ̄ϫⲁⲓ̈ⲥ. P.Kellis VII Copt. 69.5–8. Discussed in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 64. Dubois understands this as the inheritance, but from my understanding of the text, Psais II is still alive. J.D. Dubois, "Greek and Coptic Documents from Kellis: A Contribution to the History of a Manichaean Community," *Journal of Coptic Studies* 15 (2013): 21–28. One wonders how the "debts" mentioned in P.Kellis VII Copt. 72 played into this (?) situation.

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from Aphrodite (P.Kellis I Gr. 30, 32, 42, 43, 44, all from the period 360–380 CE). Pegosh, like his brother, wrote from Aphrodite (P.Kellis VII Copt. 77).[82] One of his contracts was signed in Aphrodite by the same man who signed a contract of his uncle, Pamour II (P.Kellis I Gr. 44, 382 CE, and P.Kellis I Gr. 42, 364 CE).[83] Both times, the contract states that this man also came from Kellis, but lived in Aphrodite. The strongest connection between Kellis and Aphrodite is found in a document with ownership rights to a house in Aphrodite. It is signed by grandfather Psais II on behalf of Pamour III and his son Horos (P.Kellis I Gr. 30, May 363 CE). From this letter, we learn that Horos's mother owned about half of a farm house (ἐπα̣ύ̣λεως) in Aphrodite.[84] After she passed away the ownership rights were transferred to Horos (who still lived in Kellis?).

This latter document is interesting for another reason. It records the nickname of Pamour and Horos – the "Egyptians" (Αἰγύπτιων λεγομένων). Even though they came from Kellis, they acquired a nickname as outsiders, people from the Nile valley. This nickname may have derived from their residency in Aphrodite. Just as his father, uncle, and grandfather had, Pamour III divided his time between Kellis and Aphrodite. This evidence for the internal migration of three subsequent generations between the oasis and Aphrodite led Worp to identify them as a camel-driving family with a pied-a-terre outside the oasis.[85] The introduction of the camel was pivotal in the development of the oasis's economy, because camels could cross the desert without frequent access to

82 Pamour and Maria add their postscript to his letter (just as Maria did with Pamour's letters, P.Kellis VII Copt. 64 65, 66, 71 and P.Kellis I Gr. 71). Discussed also in T. Gagos, "A Multicultural Community on the Fringes of the Desert: A Review of the Greek Papyri from Kellis," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 12, no. 2 (1999): 758, who suggests that the communication increased when more family members moved to Aphrodite.

83 If this Aurelius Pebos, son of Tithoes, is the same person as the Pebo in P.Kellis VII Copt. 66, he might also have shared a Manichaean affiliation. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 55.

84 Inherited by Horos for 1/3th, suggesting his mother had three children who all received 1/6th of the farmhouse. Worp, *GPK1*, 87–91 in particular 90n11. Other testimonials to private property in the Pamour family stem from 320, 333 and 369 CE. The first deals with a sale by Takysis of 1/4th of a house in Kellis, it is no longer visible whether it dealt with House 3 or another house (P.Kellis I Gr. 37). Worp, *GPK1*, 106. The second is a document in which Pausanias grants a plot of land to Pamour. The latter attests to Pamour III's ownership of a house, since he is able to lease one room to Psais the son of Psyros, a carpenter from Kellis, for 200 talents per year (P.Kellis I Gr. 33). Much may have changed in the period between Takysis and Pamour III, but their family's wealth and property was still relatively strong.

85 Worp, *GPK1*, 90.

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food or water and could carry up to six *artabas* across a longer distance.[86] Nevertheless, the references to camel driving in the papyri are too limited to establish with certainty whether Pamour III and his son owned camels.[87]

The letters of Pamour's relatives also contain traces of interactions with Christians. The following example is set in Aphrodite. A contract from 364 CE details that Marsis leased one room in Psais II's house in Aphrodite for the price of two *artabas* of wheat. The scribe and witness was Iakob, son of Besis the priest, reader of the catholic church (P.Kellis I Gr. 32.20–21). Such singular indications of religious officials, even if they only held minor offices, are the only religious self-designations of non-Manichaean Christians in the Kellis documents. Both Psais II and Marsis, however, have been associated with the Manichaean families of Kellis.[88] Why Marsis and Psais II did not use the services of a Manichaean scribe is unknown. It could have been caused by their remote location in Aphrodite, far from the oasis, or by the fact that they reckoned they needed someone of official status in the Aphrodite village context with experience in Greek legal documents, regardless of his religious affiliation.

Other Clusters of Letters

The Greek and Coptic papyri found at Houses 1–3 not only shed light on Makarios and Pamour's relatives, but also intimate the business and family relations of a wider group of people. Unfortunately, it is not always clear how they were related to each other, or if they lived in the same houses during the same period. Apart from the clusters of people associated with Makarios and

86 An example of a caravan of about seventy-five camels traveling between Oxyrhynchus and the oasis is discussed in C. Adams, *Land Transport in Roman Egypt: A Study of Economics and Administration in a Roman Province* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 235.

87 P.Kellis V Copt. 50 mentions the ϭⲁⲙⲟⲩⲗ and P.Kellis VII Copt. 71 pack-animals (ⲡⲃⲁⲣⲱϩⲉ, camel (?)). Cf. P.Kellis V Copt. 20.54 (Makarios about the owners of the pack-animals) and P.Kellis I Gr. 27 (mentioning small cattle in Trimithis).

88 This affiliation with the Manichaean circle known through the letters of Makarios and his son, where she is called Marshe (in Coptic). Another Greek contract could strengthen this hypothesis. P.Kellis I Gr. 30 mentions Aurelius Psais son of Pamour who acted on behalf of this son and grandson in an exchange for ownership rights in Aphrodite (363 CE). This Psais is likely to be the same as in the contract with Marsis (same name, same time, same location and same find location in Kellis). This adds strength to the hypothesis that she is a Manichaean, because Psais was also closely related to the Makarios archive. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 41 identifies the Psais in P.Kellis V Copt. 25 and perhaps 26 with Psais II. Worp, *GPK1*, 51. But see the number of individuals called Psais in Worp's onomasticum.

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Pamour, it is possible to identify at least two additional clusters. There are letters associated with Orion and Tehat (from the 350s CE) that are roughly contemporary with Makarios and Maria, while the letters associated with Petros may be from a later period (the 370s CE?).

The exact relationship between Tehat and Orion is unknown, but they were both involved in textile production, and their letters contain prosopographical connections to relatives of Makarios and Pamour.[89] In P.Kellis V Copt. 18, Orion writes to Tehat and her husband (?) Hatre concerning textile production. His other letters mention "the *agape*," which is also associated with Tehat in the KAB and two of the business accounts (P.Kellis V Copt. 44 and 47, see chapter 4). The cluster of documents attests to a dynamic business arrangement that involved a textile workshop and various individuals, including two enslaved weavers (P.Kellis V Copt. 44). The connections to Hor(os) are apparent in Tehat's business account (P.Kellis V Copt. 43.30) and in three of Orion's Coptic letters, which praise him with marked Manichaean phrases and refer to Hor(os)'s previous instructions (P.Kellis V Copt. 15–17, see chapter 3). While Tehat is located in Kellis itself, Orion and Hor(os) appear to have lived and worked elsewhere, maybe in the hamlet Thio, which is mentioned in one of the letters.[90] Further prosopographical connections are difficult to establish with certainty. A "brother Hor" is addressed by Apa Lysimachos (P.Kellis V Copt. 30, cf. P.Kellis VII Copt. 72), and a "father Horos" is greeted by Pegosh and others (P.Kellis VII Copt. 76, 78, 79, cf. "brother Hor(os)" in 82 and P.Kellis I Gr. 72). Since kinship language was sometimes used to designate status differentiation, this "father Horos" may have been an esteemed figure in the community. The various clusters of association could be brought closer together if one of these individuals is identified with the recipient of Orion's letters. One might even suggest that Hor was a member of the elect, even though he was never addressed with the honorary "Apa" title, like Apa Lysimachos.

A further set of four letters, written by a son to his mother (P.Kellis V Copt. 38–41), is associated with Petros. A fifth letter with similar content was

89 Orion and Hor are associated with the Makarios's letters through several onomastic connections. Most prominently Taliphanti in P.Kellis V Copt. 58 (Orion) and P.Kellis V Copt. 19 and 25 and 28 (Makarios archive), Hatre in P.Kellis V Copt. 17 and 18 (Orion) and P.Kellis V Copt. 24 and 26 (Makarios archive), although all identifications can be contested. The Makarios in the Greek postscript to P.Kellis Copt. 43 may have been another individual. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 32, 140. Connections to Pamour's letters are found in P.Kellis V Copt. 44 (mentioning Kouria, Pamour, Tapshai and many others), 47 (menioning mother Partheni), 48 (mentioning mother Lo) and perhaps P.Kellis VII Copt. 93 and 95 (if "sister Hat (ϩⲁⲧ)" is to be identified with Tehat).

90 P.Kellis V Copt. 50. Tehat's name is mentioned in association with Thio (KAB 106–8).

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found at the same spot (P.Kellis VII Copt. 60). There are prosopographical connections to the Tehat and Horion cluster, as P.Kellis V Copt. 18 mentions Petros, and various letters share a reference to “brother Herakles”.[91] The regular communication with another “brother,” and the apparent distance from Kellis led the editors to suggest that Petros lived in a monastic setting. This hypothesis is further strengthened by the appearance of monks named Petros and Timotheos in the KAB (as μοναχός in 976, 1080, and without title 1109, 1433).[92] Despite the tantalizing suggestion that these two monks were part of a Manichaean monastery, there is little in the letters themselves that connotes Manichaeanness. Instead, Petros and Timotheos may have been associated with the church at Dayr Abu Matta (north of Mothis), which has been identified as a monastic structure (see chapter 5).

Indications of Manichaeanness

The Manichaean connection of some of these letters stands without a doubt. Not only were the letters of Makarios, Pamour, and others found beside Manichaean liturgical and theological texts, but some of their letters actually refer to Manichaean transempirical beings, books, and officials. Because of the documentary nature of the letters, these passages are often short or ambiguous, lacking most of the contextual evidence. Some exceptions, however, provide more information about engagement with high-ranking Manichaean officials, such as an anonymous itinerant teacher, and include the use of marked religious prayer formulas derived from Mani’s own *Epistles*.

Traveling with the Teacher

Several Coptic letters refer to the interaction of Makarios’s family and the Teacher.[93] After traveling with his sons Matthaios and Piene, Makarios writes to his wife that the children, “have been taken from me” (ⲁⲩϥⲓ ⲛ̣ⲁ̣ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲧ … P.Kellis V Copt. 20.22–23) and states, “I have no power in this matter beyond … requests (?).”[94] It appears that both sons were traveling with the

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91 P.Kellis V Copt. 38, P.Kellis VII Copt. 58, and P.Kellis I Gr. 14 (?). Teigen also points to the prosopographical connections to letters by Partheni and Psais III (mentioning “brother Hom” and “father Pini”). H.F. Teigen, *The Manichaean Church in Kellis* (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 71.

92 Gardner, Alcock, Funk, *CDT1*, 235; Bagnall, *KAB*, 82.

93 The events are summarized briefly in Gardner, *Founder of Manichaeism*, 97–99.

94 ⲛ̣ⲁ̣ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲧ ⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲉï ϭⲁⲙ ⲁⲡⲓϩⲱⲃ ⲙⲉⲧⲁ … ⲛⲁⲝⲓⲱⲥ̣ⲉ̣ⲓⲥ P.Kellis V Copt. 20.22–23.

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Teacher. Matthaios accompanied them until they reached Antinoou, but Piene continued for a longer period of time:

> the Great Teacher let him travel with him, so that he might learn Latin. He teaches him well. Their body is set up, and they are good and worthwhile [i.e., they are healthy and doing well].[95]

Not only was Piene taught Latin, he was also trained in reading in every church (ⲉϥⲧⲣⲉϥⲱ̣ϣ ⲕⲁⲧ̣ⲁ̣ ⲉ̣ⲕ̣ⲕ̣ⲗ̣ⲏ̣ⲥ̣ⲓⲁ P.Kellis v Copt. 25.46), and planned go to Alexandria with the Teacher after their stay with Apa Lysimachos (P.Kellis v Copt. 29.15). Such papyrological vignettes are of great importance, as the Manichaean church hierarchy was said to be led by twelve Teachers, themselves directed only by the successor of Mani (the *Archegos*). An official designated as the "Great Teacher" (ⲡⲛⲁϭ ⲛⲥⲁ̣ϩ̣) could have been a major authority figure for the Manichaeans in the oasis.

Traveling with members of the elect constituted a particular religious group style, about which little is known. While hagiographical and polemical sources report on itinerant Manichaean leaders with a select group of supporters, this is the first time that papyrological sources can be tied together to shed light on such instances of Manichaeanness.[96] They show that Piene was not the only one traveling with the Teacher. Initially, Matthaios also traveled with the Teacher, but he was left in Antinoou when his brother and the Teacher went to Alexandria.[97] At an earlier stage, Makarios stayed at the house of Apa Lysimachos, one of the Manichaean elect whose name occurs regularly in the corpus. There, he was visited by the Teacher, who was by then very sick (P.Kellis v Copt. 24. 19–20 and 41). On this occasion, Makarios also met some of the "brothers" from Alexandria, presumably elect accompanying the Teacher, who informed him about Piene's journeys (P.Kellis v Copt. 24.25). Little is known about the Teacher himself, apart from the fact that he wrote a letter to individuals in Kellis, introducing himself as "The Teacher, and the brothers who

95 ⲡⲓⲉⲛⲉ ⲇⲉ ⲁ ⲡⲛⲁϭ ⲛⲥⲁ̣ϩ̣ ⲕⲁϥ ⲉϥⲙ[ⲁϩ]ⲉ ⲛⲉⲙⲉϥ ⲁⲧⲣⲉϥϫⲓⲥⲃⲱ ⲁⲙⲛⲧⲣⲱⲙⲁⲓⲟⲥ ϥⲧⲥⲉⲃⲟ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁϥ ⲕⲁⲗⲱⲥ ⲡⲟⲩⲥⲱⲙ̣ⲁ̣ ⲥⲙⲁⲛⲧ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲥⲉⲣϣⲉⲩ ⲕⲁⲗⲱⲥ P.Kellis v Copt. 20.24–27.

96 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 82 point to anti-Manichaean polemics about young acolytes. The young and hairless servant mentioned by Biruni, for example, is part of the discursive slander about the sexual ethics of Manichaean ascetics, which is already called into question by Biruni himself. Translation and notes in J.C. Reeves, *Prolegomena to a History of Islamicate Manichaeism* (Sheffield: Equinox, 2011), 213–15.

97 P.Kellis v Copt. 25.41–42. Makarios, in his effort to inform his wife, describes his lack of power, "until Matthaios is placed near to me" (P.Kellis v Copt.19.24). It is likely that the authority who let Piene travel with The Teacher also "placed" Matthaios somewhere. See the notes in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 170.

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are with me," indicating that he traveled with a retinue (P.Kellis VII Copt. 61).[98] The introduction of this fragmentary Coptic letter confirms that the Teacher was a church official, because, inter alia, he followed established Manichaean epistolary patterns and referred to himself only by title.[99] This, also, makes it impossible to establish whether this Teacher was the same individual as Piene's "Great Teacher."

Catechumens traveling with the elect are visible in at least two other letters from Kellis and in a Greek Manichaean letter from Oxyrhynchus. Philammon III writes, "I asked Apa Lysimachos, (and) he said that we might not stay here," suggesting that only the elect had the final word about diverging from the arranged plan.[100] In a postscript to a letter from Pamour III, Psais III (?) and a number of others are greeted by "those of Apa L(ysimachos?) and Hor."[101] This probably refers to the small group of supporters who traveled with Apa Lysimachos and Hor(os). A similar situation could be recognized after P. Oxy. XXXI 2603, a Greek letter of reference for people traveling in the "company of Ision and Nikolaos," was identified as Manichaean. Although the travelers are explicitly designated as "not catechumens," they should be received "in love" and "as friends."[102] This recommendation is supported by biblical allusions and a marked repertoire that shows deep similarities with the Kellis letters (including explicit greetings to the catechumens and elect). As in P.Kellis VII Copt 72, the contextual information is lost, but read in tandem, these Greek and Coptic passages highlight the itinerant lives of Manichaean elect, supported by catechumens who traveled with them.

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98 ⲡ̣ⲥⲁϩ̣ ⲙⲛ̣̄ ⲛ[ⲥⲛ]ⲏ̣ⲩ ⲉⲧ`ⲛⲙ̄ⲙⲏ̣[ï] P.Kellis VII Copt. 61.1. Another reference to "the Teacher" is found in P.Kellis V Copt. 52, but the text is too fragmentary to fully understand. The content seems related to textile production, and the style and paleography connect it to the Makarios archive.

99 I. Gardner, "A Letter from the Teacher: Some Comments on Letter-Writing and the Manichaean Community of IVth Century Egypt," in *Coptica – Gnostica – Manichaica: Mélanges offerts à Wolf-Peter Funk*, ed. L. Painchaud and P.H. Poirier (Leuven: Peeters, 2006), 317–23.

100 … ϫⲉ ϩⲓϫⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲡⲁ ⲗⲩⲥⲓⲙⲁⲭⲟⲥ ⲙ̣ⲁϫⲉϥ̣ ϫⲉ ⲛ̄ⲉⲛⲁϩⲙⲁⲥ ⲧⲉï P.Kellis VII Copt. 82.38–40. I follow the translation in the edition and not the preliminary notes in the first volume, in which the translation "do not save this!" was suggested.

101 ϫⲛ̄ ⲛⲁⲁⲡⲁ̣ ⲗ. ⲙⲛ̄ ϩⲱⲣ ϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲁⲡ̣ⲁⲥⲁⲛ ⲡϣⲁï ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ P.Kellis VII Copt. 72.35 (on the verso).

102 προσδέξα̣ι οὖν ἐν ἀγάπῃ ὡς φίλους, οὐ γὰρ κατηχούμενοί εἰσι̣ν ἀ[λ]λὰ τῶν περὶ Ἰσίωνος καὶ Ν̣ι̣κολά̣ου ἴδ̣[ί]οι \τυγχάνουσι/ P.Oxy. 31. 2603 25–28. Translation and discussion in I. Gardner, "Once More on Mani's Epistles and Manichaean Letter-Writing," *Journal of Ancient Christianity* 17, no. 2 (2013): 291–314. Building on the earlier examination in I. Gardner, I. Nobbs, and M. Choat, "P. Harr. 107: Is This Another Greek Manichaean Letter?," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 131 (2000): 118–24.

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Piene's role may have been more extensive. His brother writes to Maria: "[N]ow if he [Piene or the Teacher?] depends (?) on him, and the child is content following him, it will be his glory."[103] Rather than merely following the Teacher, Piene trained for several ecclesiastical duties. The fact that Piene learned how to read *and* learned Latin indicates that he was being trained as a Manichaean *lector* or, as the editors of the papyrus suggest, as one of the new elect.[104] This latter interpretation is tantalizing since there is little evidence elsewhere for the selection and training of Manichaean elect. One section of the Coptic *Kephalaia* is informative, as it hints at a system of child donation (1 Keph. 80). In this passage, catechumens are urged to follow a threefold discipline to become perfect. Apart from (1) the regular obligations of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, they are asked (2) to give a child to the church:

> A person will give a child to the church for the (sake of) righteousness, or his relative or a member of the household, or he can rescue someone beset by trouble, or buy a slave and give him for righteousness. Accordingly, every good he might do, namely this one whom he gave as a gift for righteousness; that catechumen … will share in with them (ⲛⲁⲕⲟⲓⲛⲱⲛⲏ ⲛⲉⲙⲉⲩ).[105]

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103 ⲉⲓ ⲙⲉⲛ ⲉϣⲱⲡⲉ ⲉ̣ϥⲉ̣ⲓ̈ϣⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁ̣ϥ ⲛ̄ⲧ̣ⲉ̣ ⲡⲗⲓⲗⲟⲩ ⲙ̄ⲧⲁⲛ ⲉϥⲟⲩⲏϩ ⲛ̄ⲥⲱϥ ⲡ̣ϥ̄ⲉⲁⲩ ⲡⲉ P.Kellis V Copt. 25.46–48.

104 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 76 and on 170 they state: "one wonders if Piene was being groomed for missionary work in the west." Dubois, "Une lettre du manichéen Matthaios," 235 "Ces renseignements sur les responsabilités réciproques de membres de la hiérarchie manichéenne orientent l'interprétation générale de la lettre, et surtout de la figure de Matthaios. Matthaios participe au réseau des élus manichéens charges d'instruire et de prêcher (voir peut-être aussi la référence a 'entendre ma parole,' ligne 74) dans les communautés le long de la vallée du Nil." I see no reason to divert from the primary edition which reads "everyone who wishes our word" (ⲁⲟⲩⲁⲛ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲉϥⲟⲩⲱϣ ⲡⲛ̄ϣⲉϫⲉ) as a Manichaean self-designator in line 74. This does not necessarily suggest that Matthaios was involved in teaching (nor that a first person singular is indicated here).

105 .. ⲡⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲛⲁϯ [ⲟ]ⲩϣⲏ̣ⲣⲉ ⲛⲧ[ⲉⲕ]ⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲁⲧⲇⲓⲕⲁⲓⲟⲥⲩⲛⲏ ⲏ̣ ⲡⲉϥϣⲃⲣⲅⲉⲛⲟⲥ [ⲏ ⲡⲣⲙ]ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ⲏ ⲉϥⲁⲥⲱⲧⲉ ⲛⲟⲩⲉ ⲉϥⲁϩⲉ ⲁⲣⲉⲧϥ̄ ϩⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲑⲗⲓⲯ̣[ⲓⲥ ⲏ ⲉϥ]ⲁ̣ⲧ̣ⲁⲩ ⲟⲩϭⲁⲟ̣ⲩⲁⲛ ⲛ̄ϥⲧⲉⲉϥ ⲁⲧⲇⲓⲕⲁⲓⲟⲥⲩⲛⲏ ϫⲉⲕⲁⲁ[ⲥ ⲁⲅⲁ]ⲑⲟⲛ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲉϥⲁⲉⲓ̈ⲧⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ϫⲓ ⲡⲉⲓ̈ ⲉⲧⲁϥⲧⲉⲉϥ ⲛ̄ⲇⲱⲣⲟⲛ [ⲁⲧⲇⲓ]ⲕⲁⲓⲟⲥⲩⲛⲏ ⲉⲣⲉ ⲡⲓⲕⲁⲧⲏⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ ⲉⲧⲙ̄ⲙⲉⲩ ⲉⲧ̣[.....] ⲛⲁⲕⲟⲓⲛⲱⲛⲏ ⲛⲉⲙⲉⲩ 1 Keph. 80, 193.5–11, the Coptic text is from the edition of Böhlig, the translation from Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 74. In Gardner's earlier translation the final sentence was "That catechumen who [does this] will be in partnership with them." Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher*, 202. Alternatively, "righteousness" in the first line may have referred to the lives of the elect. BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 31.

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The donation of (3) houses, children, or enslaved persons to the church was meant to establish partnership (ⲕⲟⲓⲛⲱⲛⲏ) with the elect.[106] Could Piene have been "given" to the Manichaean church?

Child donation was more commonly practiced in Christian Egypt, as becomes apparent in eighth-century contracts from the village of Jeme, in which children are donated to the adjacent monastery of Phoibammon.[107] These contracts, despite their narrative structure, do not necessarily indicate that the children were to become monks. They describe the arrangements under which children served as servants or were trained for useful occupations when parents could not afford their upbringing and education.[108] Though some of them remained ascetics, their initial role would have combined domestic duties with a monastic education.[109] One instance in the Kellis corpus confirms that ascetic teachers were involved in vocational training, as a boy named Titoue was sent to a monastery to learn from father Pebok about the linen-weaving trade (P.Kellis I Gr. 12 and P.Kellis V Copt. 12).[110] Parallels have been drawn between these eighth-century Christian practices and earlier Manichaean traditions, including the hagiographical story about Mani's youth

106 BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 59.

107 T.G. Wilfong, *Women of Jeme* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 95–116.

108 C.T. Schroeder, *Children and Family in Late Antique Egyptian Monasticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 42–49.

109 Hagiographical evidence suggests that some children remained ascetics, even though they were probably able to leave on becoming adults. See also a possible parallel with P.Oxy. XII 1493, discussed in L.H. Blumell and T.A. Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus: Texts, Documents, and Sources* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2015), 490–3.

110 In P.Kellis V Copt. 12, Titoue (Tithoes) writes his son Shamoun to inform him that his son Titoue is very well and "he has gone to the monastery to be with father Pebok" (ⲁϥⲃⲱⲕ̀ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲁⲧϩⲉⲛⲉⲧⲉ ϩⲁⲧⲛ̄ ⲡⲓ̈ⲱⲧ̀ ⲡⲉⲃⲱⲕ̀ P.Kellis V Copt. 12.6–7). In an earlier (?) letter in Greek, Shamoun instructs his father: "[A]s I indicated to you concerning my son –, put him into the monastery, where it (one) teaches him the linen-weaving trade" ([........] . σης τ̣ῶ̣ν̣ υ̣ἱῶν. Κα[θὼς ἐδήλωσ]ά σοι περὶ τον υἱον [........]βαλε εἰς τὸ μονοστή[ριον] [ὅπου δι]δάσκι αὐτὸν λινο̣ῢ̣[φικήν. P.Kellis I Gr. 12.16–20). These letters have been read in light of the question whether there was a Manichaean monastery in the oasis. I. Gardner, "'He Has Gone to the Monastery…,'" in *Studia Manichaica IV*, ed. R.E. Emmerick, W. Sundermann, and P. Zieme (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000), 247–57. The immediate context, however, is more informative about ancient apprenticeships. Late antique families could send their children into an apprenticeship even when a skilled father (and, rather exceptionally in this case, grandfather) was still alive. R.P. Saller, "The Roman Family as Productive Unit," in *A Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman Worlds*, ed. B. Rawson (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 125. Another document from Kellis mentions how an enslaved person was given to a master to learn the weaver's trade for a period of two years. P.Kellis I Gr. 19a, with interpretation in Bergamasco, "P.Kell.G. 19.A, Appendix," 193–96.

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in a Baptist sect.[111] The Manichaean *Homilies* mention children in an apocalyptic setting during (and after) the Great War (Hom. 30 and 31), and one of the Psalms alludes to religious education or training in childhood (2 PsB. 75). The *Kephalaia* contains an additional passage that confirms that children and enslaved persons were trained to become elect; a "boy from his slaves" was ordained by Mani (1 Keph. 166, 410.23–414.30 ⲟⲩⲗⲓⲗⲟⲩ ϩⲛ̄ ⲛ̣[ⲉ]ϥϭⲁ̣ⲟⲩⲟⲛⲉ on 411.1–2). Unfortunately, these passages cannot always be taken to reflect actual social practices. The letters on the education of Kellis's children are, therefore, a much-needed contribution to our knowledge of the training of elect and the role of children in Manichaean communities. They are the principal sources for collating an impression of the social structure of the Manichaean community, and they highlight the itinerancy of the Manichaean elect. Presumably, the elect also visited the oasis, but this remains invisible in the papyri. The direct result of these journeys was what I call an *itinerancy group style*, a geographically dispersed network of traveling Manichaeans sustained by local households.

Manichaean Prayer Formulas

Makarios's letters leave few doubts about his knowledge of the church of Mani. The issues discussed, the book titles mentioned, the phrases used, and the deities called on: they all connote Manichaeism. One of his letters is, in fact, the only letter explicitly citing Mani. In P.Kellis V Copt. 19, Makarios writes:

> Before everything: I greet you. I remember your gentleness and your calm, and the example (ⲧⲩⲡⲟⲥ) of your … propriety; for all this time I have been without you, I have been asking after you and hearing of your good reputation. Also, when I came to you, I found you correct as you have always been. This too is the (right) way. Now, be in worthy matters (ⲁⲛⲁⲥⲧⲣⲟⲫⲁⲩⲉ); just as the Paraclete (ⲡⲁⲣⲁⲕⲗⲏⲧⲟⲥ) has said: "The disciple of righteousness is found with the fear of his teacher upon him (even) while he is far from him; like a guardian." Do likewise, my loved one; so that I may be grateful for you and God too may be grateful for you, and you will be glorified by a multitude of people. Do not acquire fault or mockery for your good conduct (ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲕⲡⲟⲗⲓⲧⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲁⲛⲓⲧ).[112]

111 Lieu, *Manichaeism in Mesopotamia*, 151. There is no indication in CMC 121–123 about the age of the girl and her role in the community.

112 ϩⲁⲑⲏ ⲛ̄ϩⲱⲃ ⲛⲓⲙ ϯϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲁⲣⲁⲕ ϯⲉⲓⲣⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲣ̄ⲡⲙⲉⲩⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲕⲙⲛⲧ̣ϩⲗ̄ϭⲏⲧ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲉⲕⲥϭⲣⲁϩⲧ̄ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲧⲩⲡⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲕⲙⲛ̄ⲧϣⲉⲩ ⲛ̄.[.]ⲧ̣ⲉ ϫⲉ ⲡⲓⲟⲩⲁⲓϣ ⲧⲏⲣϥ̄ ⲉⲧⲁⲓⲉϥ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲕⲃⲁⲗ ⲉⲓϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥⲱⲕ

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The title "Paraclete" derives from a gospel passage in which Jesus promised his disciples a transempirical advocate (παράκλητος, John 14.16), whom Manichaeans identified with Mani and Mani's double (*syzygos*).[113] In papyri, religious references to the Paraclete only occur in Manichaean letters (P.Kellis v Copt. 19, P.Kellis i Gr. 63, P. Harr. 107). Although the source of the citation in Makarios's letter cannot be identified, it is highly probable that he cites one of Mani's *Epistles*, especially since the Kellis version of one of the *Epistles* refers to a letter on "the conducts of righteousness."[114]

Makarios not only cites Mani, he also adopts a Manichaean epistolary style based on Mani's *Epistles*.[115] Gardner has shown how several themes and stylistic decisions in the Kellis letters resemble Mani's work. This is, for example, visible in Makarios's emphasis on ardent study, where he stresses that his son should be zealous "whether I am far from you or near to you."[116] At first glance, there is nothing peculiar about this expression. Many ancient letters play with the tension between being present and absent at the same time. Even Isocrates's speech *Ad Demonicum* (of which a copy was found in House 2) starts with the description of good men cherishing their friends even when they are far away. The frequent recurrence of this theme in Manichaean letters suggests that it carried additional connotations in Kellis. The most noticeable instance of being far while near (ⲟⲩⲏⲩ – ϩⲏⲛ) is employed in the introduction of the Teacher's letter, which starts with the words:

ⲉⲓⲥⲱⲧ[ⲙ̄] ⲁ̣ⲡ̣[ⲉⲕ]ⲥⲓⲧⲛⲟⲩϥⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲣⲓⲉⲓ ⲁⲛ ϣⲁⲣⲁⲕ ϩⲁⲓϭⲛ̄ⲧⲕ̄ ⲉⲕⲥⲙⲓⲛⲧ̄ ⲛⲧⲉⲕϩⲉ ⲧⲉⲕϩ[ⲉ] ⲡⲉⲓ ⲁⲛ ⲡⲉ ⲡⲣⲏⲧⲉ ϯⲛⲟⲩ ϣⲱⲡⲉ ϩⲛ̄ ϩⲛ̄ⲁⲛⲁⲥⲧⲣⲟⲫⲁⲩⲉ ⲉⲩⲣ̄ϣⲉⲩ ⲕⲁⲧ[ⲁ] ⲧϩⲉ ⲉⲧⲉ ϩⲁ ⲡ̄ⲡⲁⲣⲁⲕⲗⲏⲧⲟⲥ ϫⲟⲥ ϫⲉ ⲡ̄ⲙⲁⲑⲏⲧⲏⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧ̄ⲇⲓⲕⲁⲓⲟⲥⲩⲛⲏ ϣ[ⲁⲩ] ϭⲛⲧϥ̄ ⲉⲣⲉ ⲧ̄ϩⲉⲣⲧⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉϥⲥⲁϩ ϩⲓϫⲱϥ ⲉϥⲟⲩⲏⲩ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁϥ ⲛ̄ⲧϩⲉ ⲛⲉⲣϥ̄ϩⲁⲣⲁϩ̣ ⲉⲣⲓ ⲡⲓⲣⲏⲧⲉ ϩⲱⲕ ⲡⲁⲙⲉⲣⲓⲧ ϫⲉⲕⲁⲥⲉ ⲉⲓⲛⲁϣⲱⲡ ⲡⲉⲕϩⲙⲁⲧ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲁⲛ ϣⲱⲡ̄ ⲡⲉⲕϩ̄ⲙⲁⲧ ⲛ̄ⲕϫⲓ ⲉⲁⲩ ϩⲓⲧⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲁⲧⲟ ⲛ̄ⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡ̄ⲣϫⲡⲉ ⲁⲓⲃⲉ ⲏ ⲕⲱⲙϣ̄ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲕⲡⲟⲗⲓⲧⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲁⲛⲓⲧ P.Kellis v Copt. 19.4–13.

113 This identification is made in the *Living Gospel,* cited in CMC, 69, but also in CMC 17, 36, 63, 70. C.M. Stang, *Our Divine Double* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 145–84; van Oort, "The Paraclete Mani," 139–57. The foremost *Kephalaia* passage on the Paraclete presents the biblical proof text (John 16.7) in Manichaean interpretations (1 Keph. 14.3–10), discussed in T. Pettipiece, "Separating Light from Darkness: Manichaean Use of Biblical Traditions in the Kephalaia," in *The Reception and Interpretation of the Bible in Late Antiquity*, ed. L. DiTommaso and L. Turcescu (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 422.

114 ⲧ̣ⲁⲛ̄ⲁⲛⲁⲥⲧⲣⲟⲫⲏ ⲛ̄ⲧ`ⲇⲓⲕ̣[ⲁⲓ]ⲟⲥⲩⲛⲏ P.Kellis vi Copt. 53, 71.18–19. Gardner, *KLT1*, 82–3. Cf. 2 Keph. 334, 385.12.

115 Gardner, "Letter from the Teacher," 321–2. For these observations about far-near. I take "like a guardian" to refer to the respect for the teacher, which kept the pupil safe, following the interpretation in H.M. Schenke, "Rezension zu Iain Gardner: Kellis Literary Texts; Iain Gardner/Anthony Alcock/Wolf-Peter Funk (Ed.): Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis," *Enchoria* 27 (2001): 229. The argument is developed in Gardner, "Once More," 291–314.

116 ..ⲉⲓⲟⲩⲏⲩ [ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲙⲙⲱⲧ]ⲛ̄ ⲉⲓϩⲏⲛ ⲁⲣⲱⲧⲛ̄ P.Kellis v Copt. 19.69–70.

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> Now, every time I am afar it is as if I am near. I remember the gentleness of your (pl.) sonship and the strength of your faith. I pray always to Jesus Christ: That he will guard you for me with this fragrance (?), as you are honoured by everyone corresponding to your conduct (ⲡⲟⲗⲓⲧⲓⲁ).[117]

Since both Makarios and the Teacher used this theme, it likely derived from a shared source. The reference to "conduct," again, ties it back to Mani's epistolary style. Other letters employ the same theme in a comparable manner. A member of the elect uses it to remind supporters in Kellis of their obligation to remember the traveling fathers in their gifts, even if they are far away,[118] and Ploutogenes addresses his brothers as those "whose memory is sealed in my soul at all times, who are far from me in the body yet are near in the state of never-changing love."[119] The frequent repetition of the theme demonstrates what sociolinguists have called a *community of practice*, the convergence of linguistic variation of people engaged in a shared practice, such as going to the same church or working in the same factory.[120] In this instance, Manichaeans in Kellis started to appropriate scriptural models in their everyday correspondences, or imitate the style and vocabulary of their religious leaders.

There are more patterns in the Kellis letters that follow Mani's epistolary style, for example, in its emphasis on Manichaean values.[121] The appreciation for correct behavior is a case in point, as Gardner has highlighted the similarity

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117 ⲛ̄ⲟⲩ[ⲁ̈ⲓϣ ⲙⲉⲛ ⲛⲓⲙ] ⲁⲉⲓⲟⲩⲏ̣ⲩ ⲉⲉⲓ ϩⲏ[ⲛ ⲁⲉⲓⲉⲓⲣⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲣ̄ⲡⲙⲉ]ⲩⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲙⲛ̄ⲧ̣ϩⲉⲗϭⲏⲧ ⲛ̄[ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲙⲛ̄]ⲧ̣ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲧ̣ⲁ̣ϫⲣⲟ ⲙ̄ⲡ[ⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲛⲁϩ]ⲧ̣ⲉ ⲁⲉⲓϣⲗⲏⲗ ⲛ̄ⲥ̣ⲏⲩ ⲛⲓⲙ ϣ[ⲁ ⲓⲏⲥⲟⲩ]ⲥ̣ ⲡⲉⲭ̄ⲣ̄ⲥ ϫⲉ ⲉϥ[ⲛ]ⲁϩⲁ[ⲣⲏϩ] ⲁ̣ⲣ[ⲱⲧⲛ̄] ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲓⲥϯⲛⲟⲩϥⲉ ⲁ̣ⲣⲉ[ⲧⲛ̄] [ⲧⲁⲓ̈ⲁⲓ̈ⲧ ⲛ̄]ⲧⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲁⲛ̣ [ⲛⲓ]ⲙ̣ [ⲛ̄ⲧⲱⲧ]ⲛ̄ ⲕⲁ̣[ⲧⲁ] [ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄]ⲡⲟⲗⲓⲧⲓⲁ ⲛ̄[.... P.Kellis VII Copt. 61.6–13. The translation from Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 32 is used and not an earlier version found in Gardner, "Letter from the Teacher," 317–23. The translation of ⲡⲓⲥϯⲛⲟⲩϥⲉ as "fragrance" is dubious; the editors note the alternative "good reputation" (P.Kellis V Copt. 19.2,7 31.20–21, P.Kellis I Gr. 63.6–7 and 1 Keph. 259.11, 380.13).

118 [ⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲉ]ⲛ̀ⲟ̣ⲩ̣ⲏⲩ· ⲉⲓⲧⲉ [ⲉⲛϩⲏⲛ ⲁ]ⲛ̣ϭⲛ̄ ⲡⲣⲡⲙⲉⲩⲉ ⲣⲱ ⲛ̄ϩⲏ[ⲧ̀ⲧⲏⲛⲉ] P.Kellis V Copt. 31.24–26: "Whether we are far or we are near: indeed we have found remembrance among you."

119 ⲛⲉⲧⲉⲣⲉ ⲡⲟⲩⲣ̄ⲡⲙⲉⲩⲉ ⲧⲁⲃⲉ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧⲁⲯⲩⲭⲏ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲩ ⲛⲓⲙ· ⲛⲉⲧⲟⲩⲏⲩ ⲙⲉⲛ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲓ̈ ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲥⲱⲙⲁ ⲉⲩϩⲏⲛ ⲇⲉ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧⲇⲓⲁⲑⲉⲥⲓⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ ⲛ̄ⲁⲧϣⲓⲃⲉ ⲁⲛⲏϩⲉ … P.Kellis VII Copt. 85.2–5, translation modified, see also P.Kellis V Copt. 15.12, 17.5, 19.5, 26.11, 31.24, P.Kellis VII Copt. 61.6–7, 63 (?), 72.10.

120 L. Milroy and M. Gordon, *Sociolinguistics: Method and Interpretation* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2003), 119; P. Eckert, *Linguistic Variation as Social Practice: The Linguistic Construction of Identity in Belten High* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000). The correlation with church attendance is discussed in W. Baker and D. Bowie, "Religious Affiliation as a Correlate of Linguistic Behavior," *University of Pennsylvania Working Papers in Linguistics* 15, no. 2 (2010): 2; J. Marshall, *Language Change and Sociolinguistics: Rethinking Social Networks* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 18–40.

121 Gardner, "Letter from the Teacher," 317–23. Gardner, "Once More," 291–314.

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between Makarios's letter and a Manichaean letter from an entirely different region. Makarios writes: "[W]hen I came to you, I found you correct as you have always been."[122] A similar statement is made in a Parthian Manichaean letter: "Furthermore you should know this: When I came, I found brother Rashten to be just as I would wish. And as for his devotion and zeal, he was just as Mar Mani would desire."[123] The commonality between the two letters is best explained as a result of deep familiarity with Manichaean scriptures and "modeling" correspondence after the Manichaean epistolary style (ⲧⲩⲡⲟⲥ P.Kellis V Copt. 19.5).[124] This is corroborated by the presence of a papyrus codex in House 3 containing sections of Mani's *Epistles* (P.Kellis VI Copt. 53), read and copied on the spot by lay Manichaeans like Matthaios (whose scribal exercises will be examined in chapter 7).

Not all marked religious phrases can immediately be identified with a Manichaean source. In fact, there are many expressions that would not have stood out from Christian writing. An additional approach, apart from looking for traces of a Manichaean epistolary style, is to contextualize the prayer formulas in the Kellis letters within the broader Egyptian Christian setting and compare them with other Greek and Coptic letters.[125] Recent studies in this field have shown that many phrases that connote Christian beliefs and practices *to us* were used by authors from various religious backgrounds. Characteristic phrases like "God is my witness," with "God" in the singular, are not exclusively Christian. Monotheistic formulas were also used outside a Christian framework, for example to address Serapis.[126] Some of the prayer formula in the Kellis letters belong to this category of shared expressions, such as "greetings in the Lord."[127]

Elements from prayer formulas addressing the "Father, the God of Truth" may have resonated with Christians and Manichaeans on different levels. Makarios's sons start their letters with praise for their mother's kindness, and continue with remarkably similar prayer formulas:

> (Matthaios to Maria) Before everything I greet you warmly, my lady mother; with my brothers, my masters whose names are very precious to

122 ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲣⲓⲉⲓ ⲁⲛ ϣⲁⲣⲁⲕ ϩⲁⲓϭⲛ̄ⲧⲕ̄ ⲉⲕⲥⲙⲓⲛⲧ̄ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲕϩⲉ ⲧⲉⲕϩ[ⲉ] ⲡⲉⲓ ⲁⲛ ⲡⲉ ⲡⲣⲏⲧⲉ P.Kellis V Copt. 19.7–8.

123 M5815 II, translation in Klimkeit, *Gnosis at the Silk Road*, 260.

124 Gardner, "Once More," 301 refers to P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 71.22–72.2 and 53, 83.20–21.

125 Bagnall and Cribiore, *Women's Letters*, 89–90; M. Choat, *Belief and Cult in Fourth-Century Papyri* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006); L.H. Blumell, *Lettered Christians* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

126 Choat, *Belief and Cult*, 106 and 111.

127 Gardner, Alcock, Funk, *CDT1*, 73.

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> me at all times, every day and every hour. This is my prayer to the Father, the God of Truth, and his beloved son the Christ and his holy spirit, and his Light angels: That he will watch over you together, you being healthy in your body, joyful in heart, and rejoicing in soul and spirit, all the time we will pass in the body, free from any evil and any temptations by Satan and any sickness of the body. And furthermore (I pray) that this great day of joy should happen to us, the (day) for which we pray indeed every hour …[128]

> (Piene to Maria) This is my prayer every hour to the Father, the God of Truth, that he may preserve you healthy in your body, joyful in your soul, and firm in your spirit; for all the time that you will spend in this place. Also, after this place, you may find life in the kingdom for eternity.[129]

It is not just these letters that resemble each other in their usage of this specific prayer formula; the combination of the prayer to "the Father, the God of Truth" with a tripartite division of body, soul, and spirit is employed in more Kellis letters (see P.Kellis VII Copt. 65.7–14, 71.4–9, 72.3–12). This resemblance has led Gardner, Choat, and Nobbs to conclude that it was "a valid and important indicator of religious belief."[130] In other words, if Greek or Coptic letters combine these features, they were most probably written in a Manichaean context. Interestingly, Gardner, Choat, and Nobbs noticed the same formulaic elements in P.Harr. 107.4–12, which they consequently reconsidered and classified as a Manichaean letter.[131]

How strongly did these formulas evoke religious groupness? David Martinez has challenged the Manichaean interpretation of P.Harr. 107, and suggests that

128 ϩⲁⲑⲏ ⲛ̄ϩⲱⲃ ⲛⲓⲙ ϯϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲁⲣⲟ ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ· ⲧⲁⲙⲟ ⲧⲁϫⲁⲓ̈ⲥ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛⲁⲥⲛⲏⲩ ⲛⲁϫⲓⲥⲁⲩⲉ ⲉⲧⲉ ⲡⲟⲩⲣⲉⲛ ⲁⲓ̈ ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲧ̀ ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ· ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲁⲓϣ ⲛⲓⲙ· ⲙⲛ̄ ϩⲟⲟⲩ ⲛⲓⲙ· ⲙⲛ̣̄ ⲟⲩⲛⲟⲩ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲡⲉⲓ̈ ⲡⲉ ⲡⲁϣⲗⲏⲗ ϣⲁ ⲡⲓⲱⲧ̀ ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲙⲏⲉ̀ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲉϥϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙⲉⲣⲓⲧ̀ ⲡⲭⲣ̄ⲥ· ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲉϥⲡⲛ̄ⲁ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ· ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛⲉϥⲁⲅ̀ⲅⲉⲗⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲁⲓ̈ⲛⲉ̣ ϫⲉϥⲛⲁⲣⲁⲓ̈ⲥ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ⲁⲣⲱⲧⲛ̄ ϩⲓ ⲟⲩⲥ̣ⲁⲡ·̀ ⲉⲣⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲁϫ ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲥⲱⲙⲁ· ⲁⲣⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲣⲁⲩⲧ̀ ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲉⲧⲛ̄ϩⲏⲧ·̀ ⲉⲧⲉ ⲧⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲗⲏⲗ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲯⲩⲭⲏ· ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲡⲛ̄ⲁ· ⲙ̄ⲡⲟⲩⲁⲓ̈ϣ ⲧⲏⲣϥ· ⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲉⲓ̈ⲧϥ̄ ϩⲛ̄ ⲥⲱⲙⲁ· ⲙ̄ⲡⲥⲁ ⲛ̄ⲃⲁⲗ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲑⲁⲩ ⲛⲓⲙ· ϩⲓ ⲡⲓⲣⲁⲥⲙⲟⲥ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ ⲡⲥⲁⲧⲁⲛⲁⲥ· ⲙⲛ̄ ϣⲱⲛⲉ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ ⲡⲥⲱⲙⲁ· ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ ⲡⲓⲛⲁϭ ⲁⲛ ⲛ̄ϩⲟⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲣⲉϣⲉ ⲧⲉϩⲁⲛ· ⲡⲉⲧⲛ̄ϣⲗⲏⲗ ⲁⲣⲁϥ ⲣⲱ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲩ ⲛⲓⲙ P.Kellis V Copt. 25.8–23.

129 ⲛ̄ⲛⲟ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲡⲉⲓ̈ ⲡⲉ ⲡⲁϣⲗⲏⲗ ϣⲁ ⲡⲓⲱⲧ̀ ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲙⲏⲉ ⲧ̣ⲁ̣[ⲣ]ⲉϥⲣⲁⲓ̈ⲥ ⲁⲣⲟ ⲉⲣⲉⲟⲩ[ⲁ]ϫ̀ ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲉ̣[ⲥ]ⲱ̣ⲙ̣ⲁ ⲉⲣⲉ̣ⲣⲉϣⲉ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧⲉⲯⲩⲭⲏ ⲉ̣[ⲣ]ⲉⲧⲁϫ̣[ⲡⲁⲓ̈ⲧ̀ ϩⲛ̄] ⲡⲉⲡⲛ̄ⲁ̣ ⲙ̄ⲡⲟⲩⲁⲓϣ ⲧⲏ[ⲣ]ϥ̄ ⲉⲧ̣ⲉⲣ̣[ⲁ]ⲉ̣ϥ ⲛ̄ⲡⲓⲙ[ⲁ] ⲙⲛ̄ⲥⲁ ⲡⲓ̣ⲙⲁ ⲁⲛ [ⲧ]ⲉ̣ϭⲓⲛⲉ ⲙ̣̄ⲡⲱⲛϩ̄ ϩⲛ̄ [ⲧ]ⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲣ̄ⲣⲟ̣ ϣⲁⲁ[ⲛ]ⲏ̣ϩⲉ P.Kellis V Copt. 29.7–13.

130 Gardner, Nobbs, and Choat, "P. Harr. 107," 123.

131 P.Harr. 107.4–12. Other variations are found in P.Kellis V Copt. 25.12–26, 29.7–13, 31.12–16, 32.19–24, P.Kellis VII Copt. 62.1–15 (?), 63.1–10 (?), 71.4–9, 72.4–5.

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some of the phrases "could have their ultimate source in the language of liturgy and protective magic."[132] The God of Truth, he points out, occurs ten times in the liturgical traditions of the fourth-century *Prayers of Serapion*. Instead of connoting Manichaeanness, the formulas could have been associated with these non-Manichaean Egyptian liturgical traditions. Despite Gardner's rebuttal addressing Martinez's argument, the dual usage of expressions remains a problematic issue, as the phrase "the God of Truth" is indeed common in the *Prayers of Serapion*, as well as in works by Eusebius, Athanasius, Epiphanius, and other Christian authors. At the same time, its frequent usage in Manichaean sources, as "the Father, the God of Truth," stands out.[133] Christians and Manichaeans participated in the same linguistic repertoire, which makes it difficult to establish whether the authors appropriated the phrases from a Christian or a Manichaean source. As the phrase "God of Truth" in personal letters is limited to P.Harr. 107 and the Coptic letters from Kellis, the Manichaean interpretation seems most likely.[134] Here, Gardner's argument about Mani's *Epistles* counts in full, as the Kellis copy of one of these letters contains the exact phrase "The Father, God of Truth" (πϊωτ πνογτε ντε τμηε).[135] Presumably then, the Manichaeans of Kellis appropriated this phrase from liturgical Manichaean texts, incorporating it into their everyday correspondence.

The tripartite division between body, soul, and spirit is less directly tied to Manichaean conventions. Just like the phrase "God of Truth," it belonged to the shared repertoire of fourth-century Egypt that was strongly influenced by New Testament traditions (1 Thess. 5:23b). Although Gardner has shown that Mani's *Epistles* contain similar expressions, the extant copies of these texts do not contain tripartite divisions, but only dipartite divisions. In the Kellis copy of one of Mani's *Epistles*, body and spirit are mentioned, while the soul

132 D.G. Martinez, "The Papyri and Early Christianity," in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, ed. R.S. Bagnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 602. The expression ὁ θεὸς τῆς ἀληθειας (Psalm 30.6 LXX) occurs more often in patristic authors (such as Eusebius, Athanasius, Epiphanius, but also the apocryphal *Acts of Thomas*). A TLG search (accessed May 2017) lists at least 30 exact matches. The date and authorship of the *Prayers of Serapion* are contested, but the most recent literature tends to see a fourth-century date for the majority of the prayers B.D. Spinks, "The Integrity of the Anaphora of Sarapion of Thmuis and Liturgical Methodology," *Journal of Theological Studies* 49, no. 1 (1998): 136–44; M.E. Johnson, *Prayers of Sarapion of Thmuis: A Literary, Liturgical and Theological Analysis* (Roma: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 1995).

133 Among others, the God of Truth is mentioned in 1 Keph. 20.30, 23.32, 25.13, 38.33, 39.32, 41.1 and 10, 81.29, 100.10, 151.20, 181.4, 217.16 etc. For more references, see Crum, CD, 117.

134 A papyri.info keyword search for ἀληθειας lists primarily Greek census documents (accessed June 2017).

135 P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 12.11, discussed in Gardner, Nobbs, and Choat, "P. Harr. 107," 121.

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is omitted.[136] The other fragments of Mani's *Epistles* contain similar formulas, but never the same full tripartite divisions that we encounter in the personal letters. The tripartite formula occurs more often, on the other hand, in ancient Christian texts and letters, including the *Prayers of Serapion* (in which the order is changed). Three Greek personal letters employ the formula in various orders, none of which adhere to the Pauline sequence (Table 4 gives an overview of the way in which this formula is used).[137] It is therefore most likely that some ancient individuals would have associated this formula with Egyptian Christian traditions, especially if they were not familiar with Manichaeism.

TABLE 4 Overview of formulas with tripartite division used in various sources

Manichaean personal letters	**Subsequent order of elements from the tripartite formula, with prayer wish in brackets**		
P.Kellis V Copt. 25	Body (health) Body (2×, free from evil, and healthy)	Heart (joy)	Soul and spirit (joy)
P.Kellis V Copt. 29	Body (health)	Soul (joy)	Spirit (firm)
P.Kellis V Copt. 32	Body (health)	Spirit (joy)	Soul (joy)
P.Kellis VII Copt. 65 (reconstructed)	Body (health)	Spirit (joy)	Soul (health)
P.Kellis VII Copt. 71	Body (health)	Soul (flourishing)	Spirit (joy)
P.Harr. 107	Soul Body (health)	Body Spirit (joy)	Spirit Soul (eternal life)
Non-Manichaean personal letters			
P.Neph. 17 (fourth century)	Soul	Spirit	Body
P.Oxy. VIII 1161 (fourth century)	Body	Soul	Spirit
SB XII 11144 (fifth–sixth century)	Soul	Body	Spirit

136 ⲛⲥ̀ⲣⲁⲓ̈ⲥ ⲁⲣⲁⲕ ⲛ̣ⲥ̣[..]..ⲙ̣̄ⲙ̣ⲁⲕ̣ [ϩⲛ̄] ⲡⲉⲕⲥⲱⲙ̣ⲁ̣ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲉⲕⲡⲛ̣̄ⲁ: ϥⲛ̄[ⲙ̄ⲙⲉⲕ] ⲛ̄ϫⲓ ⲡⲓ̈ⲱⲧ ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛⲧⲉ ⲧ̣ⲙⲏ[ⲉ..]. "… and may it [the peace of God] guard you and … you in your body, and your spirit. He is with you namely the Father, the God of Truth." P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 12.9–11. Dipartite divisions are very commonly used in Greek letters, see the list of references in Blumell and Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus*, 499n9–10.

137 Blumell, *Lettered Christians*, 224–25. Referring to Stowers, *Letter Writing*, 74. They do not refer to the fifth–sixth-century amulet that employs the same phrase: P.Coll.Youtie. 2.91.

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TABLE 4 Overview of formulas with tripartite division used in various sources (*cont.*)

Scriptural or liturgical examples of the same (?) formula			
Sundermann's edition of fragments of Mani's letters (Middle Persian)[a]	Spirit (health)	Body (content and happy)	–
Mani's letter from Kellis (P.Kellis VI Copt. 53)	Body	Spirit	–
Mani's Epistula Fundamenti (Latin)[b]	–	Heart (piety)	Soul
Mani's letter to Menoch (Latin)[c]	–	–	–
Unpublished Seventh Ktesiphon Letter (Berlin Codex)[d]	–	–	–
Mani's letter to Marcellus (Latin)[e]	–	–	–
Mani's Seal Letter (Sogdian)[f]	–	–	–
1 Thess. 5:23b (NT)	Spirit	Soul	Body (all kept sound and blameless)
Prayers of Serapion (fourth century)	Soul	Body	Spirit

a W. Sundermann, "A Manichaean Collection of Letters and a List of Mani's Letters in Middle Persian," in *New Light on Manichaeism*, ed. J.D. BeDuhn (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 259–77. Note that "spirit" is reconstructed. The order of some of the fragments is discussed in I. Gardner, "Some Comments on the Remnants of the Codex of Mani's Epistles in Middle Persian as Edited by W. Sundermann," in *Zur lichten Heimat: Studien zu Manichäismus, Iranistik und Zentralasienkunde im Gedenken an Werner Sundermann*, ed. Team Turfanforschung (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2017), 173–80.

b Translation in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 53. It is dubious whether we are dealing with the same formula here, but it is included in this list because protection from evil is referred to in a similar way as some of the other letters.

c The attribution to Mani is contested. G. Harrison and J.D. BeDuhn, "The Authenticity and Doctrine of (Ps.?) Mani's Letter to Menoch," in *The Light and the Darkness: Studies in Manichaeism and its World*, ed. P.A. Mirecki and J.D. BeDuhn (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 128–72. Translation in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 54.

d As cited and discussed in Gardner, "Once More," 296–7.

e I. Gardner, "Mani's Letter to Marcellus: Fact and Fiction in the Acta Archelai Revisited," in *Frontiers of Faith: Encounters between Christianity and Manichaeism in the Acts of Archelaus*, ed. J.D. BeDuhn and P.A. Mirecki (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 33–58.

f C. Reck, "A Sogdian Version of Mani's Letter of the Seal," in *New Light on Manichaeism*, ed. J.D. BeDuhn (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 225–39.

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In spite of the dual usage of prayer formulas that include spirit, soul, and body, there is one factor that sets the Coptic letters from Kellis apart. The Kellis letters do not simply list the body, soul, and spirit in sequence, as other texts do; they add a wish for health and joy to the three elements, reworking them into longer eloquent phrases. Piene, for example, tells his mother that he prays for her to be, "healthy in your body, joyful in your soul, and firm in your spirit."[138] This extension of the formula seems to be shared with one of the fragments of Mani's *Epistles* and not with parallel passages in Christian literature and letters. The subtlety of this distinction, and the fairly limited number of texts involved, makes it difficult to state with certainty where the expressions came from. It is, however, visible that they did not stem from an explicit and exclusive Manichaean language, as does, for example, the reference to the Manichaean "Light Mind" in one of Orion's letters (ⲙ̄ⲡⲛⲟ̣ⲩ̣ⲥ ⲛ̄[ⲟⲩ]ⲁ̣ⲓ̈ⲛⲉ P.Kellis V Copt. 15.3–4). This general "Christian tone" in the majority of the letters may have followed from the model of Mani's own *Epistles*, as well as from the situational habits of fourth-century letter writers. Makarios, Pamour, and other writers could have used more significantly distinct terminology, but they frequently used the standard patterns of language available to them.[139] Mostly, they were not involved in explicit – or *unsettled* – articulation of religious belonging, but they adopted the language of their correspondents, leading to the convergence of linguistic variation and the establishment of an in-group repertoire that carried additional meaning within the community of practice.[140] Through shared scribal training, socialization in Manichaean liturgical settings, or frequent interactions with the elect, letter writers could adopt the same linguistic repertoire (see chapter 3 on the use of self-designators and marked Manichaean repertoire).[141]

138 ⲉⲣⲉⲟⲩ[ⲁ]ϫ̀ ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲉ̣[ⲥ]ⲱ̣ⲙ̣ⲁ ⲉⲣⲉ̣ⲣⲉϣⲉ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧⲉⲯⲩⲭⲏ ⲉ̣[ⲣ]ⲉⲧⲁϫ̣[ⲡⲁⲓ̈ⲧ̀ ϩⲛ̄] ⲡⲉⲡⲛ̄ⲁ̣ P.Kellis V Copt. 29.8–10.

139 This approach is also pivotal to Boustan and Sanzo's evaluation of "Jewish idioms" in late antique amulets. They argue that most perceived Jewish features were indigenized and understood as belonging to a Christian repertoire. R. Boustan, and J.E. Sanzo, "Christian Magicians, Jewish Magical Idioms, and the Shared Magical Culture of Late Antiquity," *Harvard Theological Review* 110, no. 1 (2017): 217–40.

140 L. Milroy and J. Milroy, "Linguistic Change, Social Network and Speaker Innovation," *Journal of Linguistics* 21 (1985): 339–84.

141 See some of my earlier observations in M. Brand, "Speech Patterns as Indicators of Religious Identities: The Manichaean Community in Late Antique Egypt," in *Sinews of Empire: Networks in the Roman near East and Beyond*, ed. H.F. Teigen and E. Heldaas Seland (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2017), 105–19.

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Conclusions

Dakhleh's wealth spread beyond the elite owners of agricultural estates. Makarios, Pamour, and their relatives belonged to the affluent segment of oasis society, whose occupation strongly linked them to one of the main sources of Dakhleh's wealth: textile production and trade. The letters associated with the two families shed light on many aspects of everyday life in the village, especially when corroborated with the archaeological finds. Identifying the individuals in the papyri is not easy; common names, lacunas, and a lack of contextual information frequently hamper the process of tracing them throughout the various letters. Despite these difficulties, it is possible to trace two families for about three generations, which spanned most of the fourth century. Additional clusters of letters associated with Tehat, Orion, and Petros could be identified. They were found in the same archaeological context, and contain prosopographical connections to Pamour's and Makarios's letters. The entanglement of letters and names forms the basic framework for a wider network in which village relationships overlapped with business interactions.

Marked religious phrases within the papyri, some more group-specific than others, give away the Manichaean background, as in the usage of prayer formulas that appeal to the "Father, the God of Truth." This religious identification was important for some individuals, who frequently used a Manichaean linguistic repertoire and referred to Manichaean church officials and books. Based on these indications, we can call Makarios and his associates Manichaeans. In fact, as long as we keep the mundane nature of most of the letters in mind, it is possible to speak of a *family religion group style* that included associated elements of an *itinerancy group style*, which encompassed traveling elect who connected the Manichaeans in the Oasis with their "brothers" in the Nile valley.[142]

Manichaeans were at home in the oasis. They lived and worked within existing social patterns without always redefining relationships and interactions within a Manichaean framework. The construction of an imagined religious community seems not to have been a priority to these individuals and families. The letters do not usually convey religious identifications, except for situations in which it played a specific role, like Piene's journeys with the Teacher. Piene's experience was, however, not the default. While Makarios and his sons where closely associated with the Manichaean elect, others were not. There is no reason to assume that all individuals in House 3, or even all Manichaeans in the village, had similar experiences. For some of them, Manichaeanness may have been restricted to communal gatherings where the textual and

142 J.D. BeDuhn, "The Domestic Setting of Manichaean Cultic Associations in Roman Late Antiquity," *Archive für Religionsgeschichte* 10 (2008): 259–71.

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performative world of Manichaean scriptures and psalms was manifested (see chapter 5). Pamour and his relatives, although also associated with Apa Lysimachos, referred less frequently to the Manichaean church and its ascetic officials than Makarios's family. This variety in levels of involvement with Manichaeism shows that the inhabitants of Houses 1–3 did not spend their entire time being – or acting – Manichaean, but were happy to wear many hats.[143]

Appendix: Documents Associated with the Various Family Clusters

The following two tables give an overview of the documents that are directly related to the family of Makarios (Table 5), the extended family of Pamour III (Table 6), and the cluster of Tehat and Orion (Table 7). Due to the large number of similar names, the prosopographical connections cannot always be established with certainty. The differentiation between the various Psaises, Pamours, and (Phil)ammons is explained in detail in Appendix 2.

TABLE 5 Documents associated with Makarios

Document	Author and recipient
P.Kellis V Copt. 19	Makarios to Matthaios (and Maria)
P.Kellis V Copt. 20	Makarios to Pshempnoute, Maria, and Koure (Kyria)
P.Kellis V Copt. 21	Makarios to Pshempnoute, Kyria, and Maria
P.Kellis V Copt. 22	Makarios to Pshempnoute, Kyria, and Maria
P.Kellis V Copt. 23	Fragmentary appendix to 22 (?)
P.Kellis V Copt. 24	Makarios to Maria
P.Kellis V Copt. 25	Matthaios to Maria
P.Kellis V Copt. 26	Matthaios to Maria
P.Kellis V Copt. 27	Matthaios (fragment)
P.Kellis V Copt. 28	Drousiane (?) (fragment)
P.Kellis V Copt. 29	Piene to Maria
P.Kellis V Copt. 52	unknown[a]

a The style and handwriting show similarities with other letters from the Makarios archive. Despite the fragmentary state, a reference to textile production is legible. "The Teacher" is mentioned, but without context.

143 See Peter Brown's characterizations of late antique Christians. P. Brown, "Rome: Sex & Freedom," *The New York Review of Books*. Dec. 19, 2013.

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TABLE 6 List of documents directly related to the relatives of Pamour III

Document	Author and recipient (simplified)
P.Kellis V Copt. 35	Ouales to Psais III
P.Kellis V Copt. 36	Ouales to Psais III and Andreas
P.Kellis V Copt. 37	Ammon to Psais III
P.Kellis VII Copt. 57	Psais III (?) to P- (?)
P.Kellis VII Copt. 59	Unknown[a] to Psais III (?), Andreas
P.Kellis VII Copt. 62	Unknown (mentioning Psais III?)
P.Kellis VII Copt. 64	Pamour III to Psais III
P.Kellis VII Copt. 65	Pamour III to Pegosh, Psais III, Theognostos, Andreas
P.Kellis VII Copt. 66	Pamour III to Pegosh
P.Kellis VII Copt. 67	Pamour III to Pegosh
P.Kellis VII Copt. 68	(?) to P.... (Pamour III to Pegosh?)
P.Kellis VII Copt. 69	Pamour III to Pegosh
P.Kellis VII Copt. 70	Pamour III? (or Pegosh) to Psais III
P.Kellis VII Copt. 71	Pamour III to Partheni, Andreas
P.Kellis VII Copt. 72	Pamour III to Psais III and Theognostos
P.Kellis VII Copt. 73	Pegosh to Psais III
P.Kellis VII Copt. 74	Pegosh to (?)
P.Kellis VII Copt. 75	Pegosh to Partheni
P.Kellis VII Copt. 76	Pegosh to Partheni (or Hor)
P.Kellis VII Copt. 77	Pegosh to Kapiton
P.Kellis VII Copt. 78	Pegosh to father Horos
P.Kellis VII Copt. 79	Pegosh to father Horos (copy?)
P.Kellis VII Copt. 80	Philammon to Theognostos
P.Kellis VII Copt. 81	Philammon to Theognostos
P.Kellis VII Copt. 82	Philammon to Theognostos
P.Kellis VII Copt. 83	Theognostos to Partheni (?) and Pegosh to (?)[b]
P.Kellis VII Copt. 84	Theognostos to Psais III
P.Kellis VII Copt. 85	Ploutogenes to Psais III
P.Kellis VII Copt. 86	Ploutogenes to Psais III
P.Kellis VII Copt. 87	Ploutogenes to father Soure/Syros
P.Kellis VII Copt. 88	Ploutogenes to Andreas
P.Kellis VII Copt. 89	Ploutogenes to Tabes
P.Kellis VII Copt. 90	Psekes to Ploutogenes
P.Kellis VII Copt. 91	(?) to Iena (Ploutogenes?) and Hor

a The editors suggest the author may have been Ouales. Gardner, Alcock, Funk, *CDT2*, 26–27.
b Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 136–7.

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TABLE 6 List of documents directly related to the relatives of Pamour III (*cont.*)

Document	Author and recipient (simplified)
P.Kellis VII Copt. 95	(?) to Partheni
P.Kellis VII Copt. 102	Psais III to Partheni
P.Kellis VII Copt. 103	(?) to Pegosh
P.Kellis VII Copt. 105	Psais III to Andreas
P.Kellis VII Copt. 108	Psais III to Pegosh
P.Kellis VII Copt. 109	Kapiton to Tegoshe (?)
P.Kellis VII Copt. 110	Psais II[c] to Pamour III (and Pegosh)
P.Kellis VII Copt. 111	Pebos (and Olbinos) to Psais III (?)
P.Kellis VII Copt. 114	(?) to Philammon
P.Kellis VII Copt. 115	Tegoshe to Psais III
P.Kellis VII Copt. 116	Tegoshe (?) to Psais III
P.Kellis VII Copt. 120	Pekos (Pegosh?) to Pamour III (?)
P.Kellis I Gr. 19b	Ruling made by provincial governor to Pamour I and Philammon (298/9 CE)
P.Kellis I Gr. 20	Petition to the provincial governor by Pamour I (300–320 CE)[d]
P.Kellis I Gr. 21	Petition to former magistrate by Pamour I (321 CE)
P.Kellis I Gr. 30	Exchange ownership rights Pamour III and son (363 CE)
P.Kellis I Gr. 31	Lease of a house by Pamour I (?) (306 CE)
P.Kellis I Gr. 32	Lease of a room in Psais II's (?) house (364 CE)
P.Kellis I Gr. 33	Lease of Pamour III's (?) house (369 CE)
P.Kellis I Gr. 37	Sale of part of a house by Takysis (320 CE)
P.Kellis I Gr. 38ab	Gift of a plot of land to Psais II (333 CE)
P.Kellis I Gr. 41	Loan to the daughter of Kapiton by Pamour I (?) (310 CE)
P.Kellis I Gr. 42	Loan by Pamour II (364 CE)
P.Kellis I Gr. 44	Loan by Pegosh (382 CE)
P.Kellis I Gr. 45	Loan by Kapiton son of Kapiton (386 CE)
P.Kellis I Gr. 50	Receipt of goods addressed to Psais II
P.Kellis I Gr. 65	Philammon to Takysis
P.Kellis I Gr. 67	Apa Lysimachos to Theognostos
P.Kellis I Gr. 68	Psais III to Elias
P.Kellis I Gr. 71	Pamour III (and Maria) to Psais III
P.Kellis I Gr. 72	Pegosh to Pamour III

c Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 221.

d A petition to provincial governor by Pamour I (308 CE) is mentioned by Worp but not (yet) published. Worp, *GPK1*, 81.

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TABLE 6 List of documents directly related to the relatives of Pamour III (*cont.*)

Document	Author and recipient (simplified)
P.Kellis I Gr. 73	Psais son of Tryphanes, to Pamour III (?)
P.Kellis I Gr. 76	Pegosh to Sarapis
P.Kellis I Gr. 79	Aniketos to Psais III (?)
P.Kellis I Gr. 80	Psenamounis to Kapiton

TABLE 7 Documents associated with Orion and Tehat[a]

Document	Author and recipient
P.Kellis V Copt. 15	Orion to Hor(os)
P.Kellis V Copt. 16	Orion to Hor(os)
P.Kellis V Copt. 17	Orion to Hor(os)
P.Kellis V Copt. 18	Orion to Tehat
P.Kellis V Copt. 43	Tehat to Psenpsais (?)
P.Kellis V Copt. 44	Business account (author unknown, but it may have been Tehat)
P.Kellis V Copt. 45	Business account (author unknown, associated with 44)
P.Kellis V Copt. 46	Business account (author unknown, associated with 44)
P.Kellis V Copt. 47	Business account (author unknown, associated with 44)
P.Kellis V Copt. 48	Business account (author unknown, associated with 44)[b]
P.Kellis V Copt. 50	Unknown (Perhaps Tehat to Psenpsais?)[c]
P.Kellis V Copt. 51	Fragment of a letter addressing Tehat (θατ')
P.Kellis VII Copt. 58	Unknown (perhaps Orion to Tehat)[d]
KAB 106, 558, 1767	Various references to a Tehat (θατ), 106 associated with an *agape*.[e]

a Teigen, *The Manichaean Church in Kellis*, 68 suggests to include P.Kellis VII Copt 93 and 95, but the spelling of "sister Hat (ϩⲁⲧ)" is too different to establish the connection with certainty. P.Kellis I Gr. 12 mentions a "Thatme-," read by Bagnall as "θατ με[τα". Bagnall, *KAB*, 66. This reading underpins Teigen's more extensive list of documents associated with Tehat and Orion. The connection with P.Kellis I Gr. 14, a contract between Horion and an unknown party, witnessed by a Herakles son of Psais, is uncertain.

b Gardner, Alcock, Funk, *CDT1*, 253.

c The content resembles the business accounts, and mentions several familiar names (Hatre, Horion, Timotheos). Gardner, Alcock, Funk, *CDT1*, 276.

d The prosopographical connections include Lauti(ne), brother Saren and Talaphanti. Gardner, Alcock, Funk, *CDT2*, 20–25.

e Gardner, Alcock, Funk, *CDT1*, 46–47.

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CHAPTER 2

Pamour's Connections: Religion beyond a Conflict Model

The inhabitants of fourth-century Kellis lived in a complex sociocultural environment. Despite the somewhat remote geographical location, their economic and cultural lives were far from simple or singular. The Manichaean families also participated fully in local society. They were not isolated, but rather well connected with some of the highest social echelons of the region. Such connections in high places were most valuable in situations of conflict. Take, for example, a Greek declaration from 352 CE complaining about local violence to the office of the provincial dux of the Thebaid (P.Kellis I Gr. 24). The declaration ends with thirty-three signatures, a list of Kellis inhabitants headed by a priest "of the catholic church" and two deacons, indicating their leading role in village society.[1] Among the signees is Pamour III, who signs the complaint on behalf of eight other individuals. While this may not be striking in itself, it highlights the fundamental embeddedness of the Manichaeans in village society. Pamour III acted as one of the villagers. Along with all of his neighbors, he was affected by episodes of violence, depended on patronage structures, followed local Christian leaders, and interacted with high-ranking administrative and military elites.

Pamour's connections within the region meant that he, and his relatives, lived amidst the religious and cultural multiplicity of the village. Separated from the mainland of Egypt by long journeys through the desert, the inhabitants of the oasis showed an "extraordinary independence of mind," navigating between a strong attachment to their cultural past and the desire for a Classical or Roman education and lifestyle.[2] This double attachment – or "island mentality" – is visible in the art and archaeology of ancient Kellis, which shows archaizing tendencies, independence, and innovation.[3] The preserved finds speak not only to wealth and a broad cultural orientation, but

1 See, T. Gagos and P. van Minnen, *Settling a Dispute: Towards a Legal Anthropology of Late Antique Egypt* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 12–14.

2 O.E. Kaper, "The Western Oases," in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*, ed. C. Riggs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 721–28.

3 E.F. Morris, "Insularity and Island Identity in the Oases Bordering Egypt's Great Sand Sea," in *Thebes and Beyond: Studies in Honour of Kent R. Weeks*, ed. Z. Hawass and S. Ikram (Cairo: Supreme Council of Antiquities Press, 2010), 129–44.

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also to the variety of religious repertoires available to the inhabitants of the village, a multiplicity that extended into the fourth century. Archaeological and papyrological sources reveal the continuation of Egyptian temple religion into the fourth century, the visual prominence of classical Greek and Roman culture, the appropriation of horoscopes and amulets by Manichaeans, and the increasing influence of Christian practices and institutions.[4] Pamour's connection to Christian ecclesiastical officeholders and the Roman administrative and military elite issue from this wealthy multilayered village context. It suggests an absence of religious conflict. While individual instances of maltreatment and anxiety are visible in the papyri, the overall picture hardly warrants interpreting the situation in Kellis through the lens of anti-Manichaean Roman legislation or Manichaean hagiographical narratives of suffering and persecution. Melodramatic grand narratives about religious persecution and black and white rhetoric about conflicting identities are entirely absent from the documentary papyri. Rather, the Kellis finds showcase local religious coexistence *on the ground*, mostly devoid of any indication of group-specific religious conflict or competition.[5]

Egyptian Temple Religion

Traditional Egyptian temple practices continued into the early decades of the fourth century, thereby overlapping with the earliest Manichaean families and the establishment of Christian churches in the oasis. One of the sensational discoveries of the Dakhleh Oasis Project was the Roman temple of Tutu at Kellis (in Area D). Tutu (in Greek called Tithoes) was venerated as the main deity of the village, along with his mother Neith and his consort Tapsais.[6]

4 The following classification into various cultural and religious repertoires is primarily heuristic and serves the purpose of illustrating diversity and interconnections, instead of solid cultural boundaries. V. Stolcke, "Talking Culture: New Boundaries, New Rethorics of Exclusion in Europe," *Current Anthropology* 36, no. 1 (1995): 1–24.

5 On melodramatic grand narratives derived from religious rhetoric, and their relationship to the historical reality of "religious dissenters" in Late Antiquity, see M. Kahlos, *Religious Dissent in Late Antiquity, 350–450* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

6 In the temple complex, Tutu was worshiped together with his consort, while he featured next to Tapsais in the Main Temple, with Neith in the birth shrine (*mammisi*). Neith and Tapsais were venerated in the west temple. Kaper, *The Egyptian God Tutu*, 110. A second or third-century bronze, of excellent quality, representing Tapsais indicates her role next to Tutu, just like the sandstone depiction of the Roman emperor Pertinax (short reign in 193 CE) offering her a *sistrum*. O.E. Kaper and K.A. Worp, "A Bronze Representing Tapsais of Kellis," *Revue d'Egyptologie* 46 (1995), 107–18; Hope, "Excavations in the Settlement of Ismant el-Kharab in 1995–1999," 180 plate 5.

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The temple complex dedicated to these deities originated in the early Roman period, underwent further extensions in the second and third century, and fell into disuse in the second or third decade of the fourth century.[7] Egyptian and Roman architectural features characterized the buildings, which had painted decorations depicting Roman and Egyptian deities. Life-size statues surrounding the processional road led toward the main temple.[8]

Tutu was known as a protective deity. He was only worshiped in subsidiary cults in the Nile valley, but venerated as a principal deity in Kellis.[9] In temple inscriptions, Tutu is hailed as a protector against demons and described as the "Agathos Daimon in this town," while his consort Tapsais is praised as "the queen Tapsais, the mistress of the city."[10] Many depictions portray Tutu as a sphinx, as for example on a limestone fragment coated with an oily mud layer resulting from ritual oil libation within the main temple.[11] Wooden and ceramic fragments of portable barque shrines (modeled after a type of boat) were found, and there are indications that they were used during a regional festival to celebrate Tutu.[12]

Tutu's prominent role in Kellis is not the only religious practice that stood out from mainstream patterns in the Nile valley. Other protective deities also received religious veneration in the oasis. That the cult of Seth, the "lord of the oasis," existed at the temple of Mut el-Kharab (Mothis) is remarkable, since the veneration of Seth was supposedly suppressed in the Nile valley after the

7 C.A. Hope, "Objects from the Temple of Tutu," in *Egyptian Religion: The Last Thousand Years, Part II. Studies Dedicated to the Memory of Jan Quaegebeur*, ed. W. Clarysse, A. Schoors, and H. Willems (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 810. By the end of the third century, most Egyptian temples were in decline, even though local practices as festivals and oracles continued for some time. The previous consensus about the correlation between the decline of the temple cults and the rise of Christianity is no longer accepted. In contrast to the situation in the Fayyum, there is ample evidence for Roman period temples in the western desert, as building activities took place under the Roman emperors Hadrian and Antoninus Pius in the second century, as well as third-century modification to the temples at Hibis and Kellis. O.E. Kaper, "Temple Building in the Egyptian Desert During the Roman Period," in *Living on the Fringe*, ed. O.E. Kaper (Leiden: Research School CNWS, Leiden University, 1998), 151.

8 These statues included Isis, Serapis and a stele of Tutu as a Sphinx, as well as a life-size bust of Isis-Demeter. O.E. Kaper, "The God Tutu at Kellis: On Two Stelae Found at Ismant el-Kharab in 2000," in *Oasis Papers 3*, ed. G.E. Bowen and C.A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2004), 311–21.

9 O.E. Kaper, *The Egyptian God Tutu: A Study of the Sphinx-God and Master of Demons with a Corpus of Monuments* (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 112.

10 Kaper, *The Egyptian God Tutu*, 76, R-61 and R-48 Tapsais in R-54.

11 Hope, "Objects from the Temple of Tutu," 817.

12 Kaper, *The Egyptian God Tutu*, 153–4. On the portable shrines, see Hope, "Objects from the Temple of Tutu," 836, 840–1.

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25th Dynasty.[13] A more proximate example involves the use of vaulted shrines, which were generally associated with funerary cults in the Nile valley, but appear regularly in the oasis. The impressively decorated *mammisi* of Tutu next to the Main Temple of Kellis includes this feature.[14] The decoration of this *mammisi*, moreover, only depicts one Pharaoh among over four hundred deities and other transempirical beings. Outside Egypt, the role of the Pharaoh was often suppressed in decorations, but it is an exceptional occurrence within Egypt. The combination of Pharaonic-style and Roman-style wall paintings in the *mammisi* with Roman-style depictions elsewhere was unheard of outside the oasis.[15] The archaizing tendencies found in inscriptions of emperor cartouches and the continued use of the traditional Egyptian calendar (even as 392 CE) are also specifically local features.[16] Together, this suggests that the inhabitants of the oasis had great cultural freedom to navigate between

13 Kaper, "The Western Oases," 722; Hope, "The Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab and Mut El-Kharab in 2001," 49; Hope, "Report on the Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab and Mut El-Kharab in 2005," 47.

14 Kaper, "The Western Oases," 724.

15 Kaper, "The Western Oases," 724. On the suppressed role of the Pharaoh, see O.E. Kaper, "Galba's Cartouches at Ain Birbiyeh," in *Tradition and Transformation: Egypt under Roman Rule*, ed. K. Lembke, M. Minas-Nerpel, and S. Pfeiffer (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 181–201. On the decorations, see C.A. Hope et al., "Excavations at Mut El-Kharab and Ismant el-Kharab in 2001–2," *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 13 (2002): 102–5; H. Whitehouse, "Mosaics and Painting in Graeco-Roman Egypt," in *A Companion to Ancient Egypt*, ed. A.B. Lloyd (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 1025 notes parallels at the temenos wall of the temple at Deir el-Haggar and the rock shrine at Ain el-Labakha. Cf. Hope, "Excavations in the Settlement of Ismant el-Kharab in 1995–1999," 191 and plate 14. The tomb of Petosiris at Qaret el-Muzawwaqa illustrates this curious mixture of cultural elements, as it depicts Anubis, Isis, and Nephthys next to the deceased on a funerary bed. Tutu, in his guise as a sphinx, is also depicted. The deceased is depicted in Egyptian dress, but also in a Roman-style painting, dressed in a Roman toga at an offering scene. This mixture of styles also characterizes the zodiac ceiling of both chambers as well as the decoration at the neighboring tomb of Petubastis. H. Whitehouse, "Roman in Life, Egyptian in Death: The Painted Tomb of Petosiris in the Dakhleh Oasis," in *Living on the Fringe*, ed. O.E. Kaper (Leiden: Research School CNWS, Leiden University, 1998), 253–70. On this tomb see also C. Riggs, *The Beautiful Burial in Roman Egypt: Art, Identity, and Funerary Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 161–5; M.S. Venit, *Visualizing the Afterlife in the Tombs of Graeco-Roman Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 157–182.

16 Kaper, "The Western Oases," 724. See also the late third-century contract O.Kellis 145 (294 CE, which gives its date "according to the traditional Egyptian calendar"). The hieroglyphic names of the Roman emperors Galba and Pertinax do not appear outside the oasis. The horoscopes are published in K.A. Worp and T. de Jong, "A Greek Horoscope from 373 A.D.," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 106 (1995): 235–40; Worp and de Jong, "More Greek Horoscopes," 204n5.

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traditional Egyptian practices – sometimes even adopting them anachronistically to stress their Egyptianness – and elements from the Classical and Roman world.

The temple's influence on – and integration with – village life during Late Antiquity is difficult to assess. The frequent occurrence of "Tithoes" as a personal name suggests a prevalence of private veneration, but no definitive evidence of his domestic cult was found in Kellis.[17] The archaeological finds included various depictions and statuettes of deities in domestic settings. In House 4 these were combined with a graffito mentioning the "leadership" of a priesthood of association.[18] The remains of an entire adult female goat, buried at the entrance of the so-called "Roman Villa" in Area B, and the extensive decorative scheme suggest that domestic space was used as a meeting place for religious association.[19] This domestic aspect of religion could play a role in the interpretation of a number of ceramic figurines found in Houses 1–5 that resemble Coptic devotional objects, although dating remains a problem.[20] It is unclear if – or how – these objects related to the Manichaean families who once

17 Kaper, *The Egyptian God Tutu*, 146 and 79–86 on personal names.

18 Bowen et al., "Brief Report on the 2007 Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab," 21–52. C.A. Hope et al., "Report on the 2010 Season of Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab, Dakhleh Oasis," *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 21 (2010): 42. A second-century painted panel of Isis, found in the temple complex, probably derived from a domestic context and was given as votive gift to the temple. H. Whitehouse, "A Painted Panel of Isis," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1992–1993 and 1993–1994 Field Seasons*, ed. C.A. Hope and A.J. Mills (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999), 95–100; C.A. Hope, "Isis and Serapis at Kellis: A Brief Note," *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 5 (1995): 37–42. O.E. Kaper, "Isis in Roman Dakhleh: Goddess of the Village, the Province, and the Country," in *Isis on the Nile: Egyptian Gods in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt*, ed. L. Bricault and M.J. Versluys (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 149–80. The statuettes are published in A. Stevens, "Terracottas from Ismant el-Kharab," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994–1995 to 1998–1999 Field Seasons*, ed. C.A. Hope and G.E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2000), 294 and no. 1. Wrongly identified as Isis-Demeter, according to Kaper, "Isis in Roman Dakhleh," 173n74.

19 H. Whitehouse, "A House, but Not Exactly a Home? The Painted Residence at Kellis Revisited" in *Housing and Habitat in the Ancient Mediterranean: Cultural and Environmental Responses*, ed. A.A. Di Castro, C.A. Hope, and B.E. Parr (Leuven: Peeters, 2015), 243–54; H. Whitehouse "Dining with the Gods in the Painted Residence at Kellis?," in *Oasis Papers 9*, ed. G.E. Bowen and C.A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2019), 345–352. On the goat, see Hope et al., "Report on the 2010 Season of Excavations," 44.

20 Stevens, "Terracottas from Ismant el-Kharab," no. 20 and 35. Stevens notes that the lack of Nile sediments shows local production. On the continuation of these figurines in an ancient Christian domestic religion, see D. Frankfurter, "Female Figurines in Early Christian Egypt: Reconstructing Lost Practices and Meanings," *Material Religion* 11, no. 2 (2015): 190–223.

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lived in the buildings. Apart from minor archaeological finds, there is a direct connection between House 2 and the temple of Tutu in the papyri associated with the priest Aurelius Stonios. Stonios was active during the turn of the late third/early fourth century and he is last mentioned in a legal contract where he acts as a witness and scribe in the division of a residential property between four (?) brothers and their sister (P.Kellis I Gr. 13 from 335 CE). His influential position also shows in the temple papyri, which include two of his petitions to the governor of the Thebaid (dating from 288–300 and 300–335 CE) and a letter by the chief priest mentioning his name.[21] Among other things, these petitions highlight the existence of a stable temple hierarchy with considerable influence in the village.[22] Along with the frequent mention of priests in letters and ostraca, these documents show that the temple – within walking distance from Houses 1–3 – remained an economically viable institution in the first decades of the fourth century.[23]

Classical Traditions from the Greek and Roman World

Kellites not only encountered elements of a traditional Egyptian repertoire in their daily lives, but they also employed Classical traditions from beyond Egypt. Greek and Roman cultural influences in Kellis are visible in decorative schemes, literary documents, school exercises, and Greek archaizing of personal names. Sometimes, these features carry a marked sense of otherness, but often they would not have stood out, as Greco-Roman culture had been part and parcel of Egyptian society for centuries.

21 K.A. Worp, "Short Texts from the Main Temple," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994–1995 to 1998–1999 Field Seasons*, ed. C.A. Hope and G.E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002), no. 1, 4 and 5.

22 The chief priest must have had some influence, since two of the letters address the village heads (comarchs) of Kellis. Worp, "Short Texts from the Main Temple," 334, no. 1–3, dating from between 300–335 CE. Another text contains a report sent to Valerius Sarapion, a provincial official, referring to circumcised adult priests and the presence of still-uncircumcised infants (no. 10, dating after 304 CE).

23 Kaper, *The Egyptian God Tutu*, 150. The priests include: *pastophoros* (lector priests), Worp, "Short Texts from the Main Temple," no. 7.5, 10.5 and unpublished D/1/75, D/1/84, D/1/84.26; K.A. Worp, *Greek Ostraka from Kellis* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2004), no. 98; 126; 134. *Prophetes*, Worp, "Short Texts from the Main Temple," no. 6.2 and D/1/75/35, D1/84.12, D/1/84/21 including someone called Pachoumis. A priestly scribe, Worp, "Short Texts from the Main Temple," D/1/75.20. The inclusion of infants, the uncircumcised priests in training, suggests that they expected a new generation of priests in the early years of the fourth century. Worp, *Greek Ostraka from Kellis*, 12.

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Classical texts belonged to the educational curriculum in late antique Kellis. Two shrines at the temple complex yielded remains of a local school: pens, ostraca, boards, and several school exercises. These finds also included miniature codices with a Homeric text, mathematical exercises, and a list with Greek verbs. From the mistakes in the exercises, we can conclude that they functioned in the context of a school rather than a full-fledged scriptorium. Codex with speeches of Isocrates, a copy of Homer, and other texts found in the various Roman period houses reveal that the influence of Classical literature extended beyond this school setting.[24]

The most prominent examples of Classical Greek imagery combined with Roman decorative styles were found in the Roman Villa (B/3/1), an elaborate complex of twenty-two rooms, most of which contained painted decorations on the wall and ceiling plaster. The architecture followed the Roman design for atrium houses, even though an *impluvium* did not match the local climate.[25] Colored statues – some of them life-size – statuettes, and elaborate wall paintings characterized the house.[26] The Classical texts found in the Roman Villa indicate that the inhabitants either received a Classical training or pursued one for their children. This is paralleled in one of the houses at Trimithis, which had a school next door.[27] Some scholars have looked for Christian influences in some of these texts, identifying a reference to a singular "god" comparable with the Christian god,[28] or recognizing elements of the "Pater noster"

24 On the documents from Shrine I, see C.A. Hope and K.A. Worp, "Miniature Codices from Kellis," *Mnemosyne* 59, no. 2 (2006): 226–258. On the documents and setting from Shrine III, see K.A. Worp and C.A. Hope, "A New Fragment of Homer," *Mnemosyne* 51 no. 2 (1998): 206–10. Recently reported are papyrus fragments from the *Odyssey* and Demosthenes's *In Aphobum*. Hope et al., "Report on the 2010 Season of Excavations," 27. These texts have not yet been edited and published, therefore do not appear in the list in the appendix.

25 C.A. Hope and H. Whitehouse, "A Painted Residence at Ismant el-Kharab (Kellis) in the Dakhleh Oasis," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 19 (2006): 318.

26 C.A. Hope et al., "Report on the Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab and Mut El-Kharab in 2006," *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 17 (2006): 26. The decorated panels with painted plaster depict scenes from Greek literature: Perseus rescuing Andromeda, Odysseus being recognized by Eurykleia, the Olympian deities witnessing the adultery of Aphrodite and Ares, Orpheus taming the animals and Zeus seducing Europa. These Classical themes are combined with a more local depiction of *Polis* (the personification of Trimithis?) as allusion to the role of the house owner in the administration. See also S. McFadden, "Art on the Edge: The Late Roman Wall Painting of Amheida, Egypt," in *Antike Malerei zwischen Lokalstil und Zeitstil*, ed. N. Zimmermann (Wien: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2014), 359–70.

27 R. Cribiore, P. Davoli, and D.M. Ratzan, "A Teacher's Dipinto from Trimithis (Dakhleh Oasis)," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 21 (2008): 179–91.

28 Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 187 (Cribiore).

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in a Homeric-inspired text that reads: "Father Zeus, give us bread."[29] Both identifications, however, are tentative and hardly grounded in the texts themselves. What these documents show is that Classical literature was appreciated at Kellis and Trimithis, and was used with some creative freedom in an educational setting.[30]

Classical traditions also reverberate in the onomastics. Roger Bagnall has highlighted the number of Classical Greek names in the oasis. Just like the reintroduction of clay tablets (now inscribed in Greek)[31] and the curious dating practices in the temple, these names reflect an archaizing tendency. They connote Classical Greek figures like Peleus (the father of Achilleus), Kleoboulos, Pausanias, and Isocrates – though many other names have either an Egyptian theophoric or Christian background. The revival of old Greek names at the end of the third century CE is far more marked in the Great Oasis than elsewhere. It shows a new attachment to Greek *paideia* that was part of late antique elite culture.[32] Just like the choice to display images of Greek or Roman deities, names and educational choices may have connoted wealth and social status, rather than a group-specific religious affiliation.

Celestial Power and Amulets

Many of the documents found in Kellis contain horoscopes, amulets, and spells – textual and material genres shared by various religious traditions. In the oasis, the zodiac is depicted in early Roman tomb decorations and on the ceiling of a temple at the western end of the oasis.[33] The papyri show that the power of the stars and the benevolence of transempirical beings were called

29 Hope and Worp, "Miniature Codices from Kellis," 247.

30 Other school exercises include O.Kellis 153, 157, 161. More texts from the school at Trimithis are published in R. Cribiore and P. Davoli, "New Literary Texts from Amheida, Ancient Trimithis (Dakhla Oasis, Egypt)," *Zeitschrift fur Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 187 (2013): 1–14.

31 Greek clay tablets have been found in the Roman Villa at Kellis, the temple area, and at Trimithis. K.A. Worp and C.A. Hope, "A Greek Account on a Clay Tablet from the Dakhleh Oasis," in *Papyri in Honorem Johannis Bingen Octogenarii*, ed. H. Melaerts (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 474; Kaper, "The Western Oases," 726–27 with picture of the clay tablet from Amheida.

32 Kaper, "The Western Oases," 729; Wagner, *Les oasis d'Égypte*, 224–8. For Trimithis, Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 212–16 (Bagnall). This is more broadly attested for Christians in late antique Egypt. Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 251–52.

33 O.E. Kaper, "The Astronomical Ceiling of Deir El Haggar in the Dakhleh Oasis," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 81 (1995): 175–95.

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TABLE 8 List of documents associated with celestial power

Text	Content	Location
P.Kellis I Gr. 82	Calendar of good and bad days	House 3
P.Kellis I Gr. 83	Calendar of good and bad days	House 3
P.Kellis I Gr. 84	Horoscope (373 CE)	House 3
P.Kellis II Copt. 5	Fragments of an astrological (?) text	House 3
TM 700788	Page of Oracle Book (inv. P96.150)	D/8
SB 26 16826 and SB 26 16827	Horoscopes (388 and 392 CE)	D/8
SB 26 16828	Horoscope (332 CE)	D/8
SB 26 16829	Horoscope (364 CE)	D/8
O.Kellis 159	Fragment of a horoscope	Main Temple, Room 7
O.Kellis 160	Fragment of a horoscope	Main Temple, Room 12

upon by beneficiaries from various walks of life, including the inhabitants of Houses 1–3 (Table 8).[34]

Two prominent examples of documents relating to celestial power are the calendars of good and bad days, found at House 3 (P.Kellis I Gr. 82 and 83). Calendars of lucky and unlucky days offer guidance as to on which days meaningful activities should be avoided and which days are auspicious.[35] In addition to these calendars, eight fragments of Greek horoscopes were found. Among them are two relatively short horoscopes on ostraca, and three horoscopes on wooden boards.[36] The writing mistakes in some of these horoscopes suggest that they were produced in an educational setting.[37] In total, at least six of the

34 I would like to thank Sofía Torallas Tovar and Korshi Dosoo for sharing their forthcoming reflections on the House 3 archive of magical texts.

35 For a new reading and a note on the use of one of these calendars, see F.A.J. Hoogendijk, "A Note on P.Kellis I 82," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 120 (1996): 216–8.

36 P.Kellis I Gr. 84 was written on the back of a Coptic business account (P.Kellis V Copt. 48) from House 3. Gardner, *CDT1*, 266 argues that the Greek was written on top of the Coptic, since the business account in Coptic continued.

37 Worp and de Jong, "A Greek Horoscope," 238 "astronomical dabbling," "skill is equally poor"; Worp and de Jong, "More Greek Horoscopes," 206 "astronomical ignorance." They have suggested that the documents served an educational purpose, but it seems unlikely that a teacher would make these kinds of mistakes in example-pieces. On education, apprenticeship, and initiation in astrology, see T. Barton, *Ancient Astrology* (London: Routledge, 1994), 134–41. Most of these documents were found in an educational setting

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horoscopes date from the period between 332 CE and 392 CE.[38] The fact that the horoscopes continue to use the Egyptian calendar alongside the Greek calendar shows the archaizing tendency of the oasis, as most horoscopes from the Nile valley came to use another style of dating. The practitioner was therefore either simply aware of local variation in style, or missed out on the more recent developments in the Nile valley.[39]

Who ordered a Greek horoscope for the birth of their child (the most common occasion for a horoscope)? Based on the find location(s), we cannot exclude the families living in House 3 – even though Christian and Manichaean leaders frowned upon astrology.[40] In fact, an allusion to a celestial power in Matthaios's letter to his mother suggests familiarity with astrological discourse; he refers to "whether they [referent is unclear] are dreams (?) or whether it is the sphere (ⲧⲥⲫⲉⲣⲁ)," and says that they might "change and cast us once again towards you."[41] The hope for a benevolent influence

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inside the temple complex. The one exception was found in House 3, but it was written by the same hand as two of the other texts. Worp and de Jong, "More Greek Horoscopes," 213.

38 Excluding the two ostraca which contain only fragments. Worp and de Jong, "More Greek Horoscopes," 213. This long continuation is interesting since astrology met with imperial opposition during Late Antiquity. Laws under Constants (C.Th. 9.16.4 of 357 and 9.16.6 of 358) explicitly forbid the consultation of astrologers. There was a continuation of these laws under Valentinian (C.Th. 9.16.8) and Honorius (C.Th. 9.16.12 of 409 CE). T. Hegedus, *Early Christianity and Ancient Astrology* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 9.

39 Worp and de Jong, "More Greek Horoscopes," 204n5.

40 On the one hand, religious leaders rejected astrology and magic, while on the other hand, Manichaean and Christian texts pay elaborate attention to astrology and employ astrological metaphors in their cosmology. K. von Stuckrad, *Das Ringen um die Astrologie: Jüdische und christliche Beiträge zum antiken Zeitverständnis* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2000). With a summary in K. von Stuckrad, "Jewish and Christian Astrology in Late Antiquity: A New Approach," *Numen* 47, no. 1 (2000): 1–40. As von Stuckrad argues, these astrological issues are best understood as a shared plural field of astrological discourses that allowed for multiple positions and interpretations. K. von Stuckrad, "Interreligious Transfers in the Middle Ages: The Case of Astrology," *Journal of Religion in Europe* 1 (2008): 55.

41 ⲉⲓϣⲱ̣ϫⲉ̣ ⲛ̣̄..ⲥⲟ̣ⲩ ⲛ̣ⲉ ⲉⲓϣϫⲉ ⲧⲥⲫⲉⲣⲁ ⲧⲉ ⲡ̣ⲧ̣ⲱⲡ̣ ⲏ̣ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲛ ⲧⲁ̣ⲭⲁ ⲁⲛ ⲛ̄ⲥ̣ⲉϣ̣ⲓⲃⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥ<ⲉ>ⲛⲁϫⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ⲕⲉⲥⲁⲡ ϣⲁⲣⲱⲧⲛ̄· P.Kellis V Copt. 25.26–29. The editors note that it is difficult to read ⲥⲓⲟⲩ (stars) and therefore suggest to read [ⲡⲉ]ⲥⲟⲩ, and translate "dreams." The editors suggest a general meaning of "a wish (combined with a certain fatalism?) that circumstances will contrive to bring them together again." Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 192. Jean-Daniel Dubois translates "ou alors que ce soit des [rêves] ou la sphère de la [zoné]," in which he directly connects the (postulated) persecution with the demons in the zones or layers the soul passes in its ascent. J.D. Dubois, "Une lettre du manichéen Matthaios (P. Kell. Copt. 25)," in *Coptica, Gnostica, Manichaica: Mélanges offerts à Wolf-Peter Funk*, ed. L. Painchaud and P.H. Poirier (Leuven: Peeters, 2006), 233. "Sphere" (ⲧⲥⲫⲉⲣⲁ) features in one of the Manichaean texts (P.Kellis II Copt. 1, text A, line 6–8), but is also a common term in gnostic texts, see for example the relation between magic, astrology and "spheres"

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from the stars and spheres that is visible in this letter shares characteristics with the more explicit Manichaean notions of celestial determinism in the *Kephalaia* (1 Keph. 46, 117.32–118.12 and 48, 122.15) and the Syriac Manichaean fragments from Egypt.[42] Therefore, despite the absence of direct onomastic evidence in the horoscopes, it is most likely that Matthaios, Pamour, and other Manichaeans were involved in astrological practice.

The celestial power of the stars and the benevolence of transempirical beings was not considered written in stone: rituals could affect one's fortune. Some of these rituals have been classified by scholars as "magic," a category that is now widely recognized as problematic.[43] The Kellis finds included many texts that are usually considered in this category: amulets, spells, and magical

in the *Pistis Sophia*, discussed by J. van der Vliet, "Fate, Magic and Astrology in the *Pistis Sophia*, Chaps 15–21," in *The Wisdom of Egypt*, ed. A. Hilhorst and G.H. van Kooten (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 519–36. P.Kellis II Syr./Copt. 2 deals with the moon-cycle in relation to the salvation of Light. The fragment P.Kellis II Syr. 1, text I also contains the word "omen".

42 The Allberry Fragments from the Cambridge University Library contain, most probably, an astronomical Manichaean text. N.A. Pedersen and J.M. Larsen, eds., *Manichaean Texts in Syriac* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 193–7. Manichaean sources include elaborate astrological systems of correspondences between the body and the cosmos (melothesia, see 1 Keph. 69 and 70). Pettipiece, *Pentadic Redaction*, 62–68; H.G. Schipper, "Melothesia: A Chapter of Manichaean Astrology in the West," in *Augustine and Manichaeism in the Latin West*, ed. J. van Oort (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 195–204. Earlier discussion in Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire*, 177–79; R. Beck, "The Anabibazontes in the Manichaean Kephalaia," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 69 (1987): 193–96; V. Stegemann, "Zu Kapitel 69 der Kephalaia des Mani," *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 37 (1938): 214–23; A. Panaino, "Astrologia e visione della volta celeste nel manicheismo," in *Atti del terzo congresso internazionale di studi: 'Manicheismo e Oriente cristiano antico'*, ed. L. Cirillo and A. van Tongerloo (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997), 249–95. Noteworthy is the description of the Manichaeans by Mark the Deacon (concerning the debate between the Manichaean electa Julia and the Christian bishop of Gaza in the year 397 CE), stating that Manichaeans "believe in horoscopes, fate, and astrology in order to be able to sin without fear since, according to them, we are not really accountable for sin, it is the result of a fateful necessity." Cited and translated in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 32. See also 1 Keph. 46 and Hom. 30.2. The discussion by Jones is limited to the *Kephalaia*, and aims to establish a connection with Bardaisan and Elchasai. F.S. Jones, "The Astrological Trajectory in Ancient Syriac-speaking Christianity (Elchasai, Bardaisan, and Mani)," in *Atti del terzo congresso internazionale di studi 'Manicheismo e oriente cristiano antico'*, ed. L. Cirillo and A. van Tongerloo (Leuven: Brepols, 1997), 183–200.

43 D. Frankfurter, ed., *Guide to the Study of Ancient Magic* (Leiden: Brill, 2019); D. Aune, "'Magic' in Early Christianity and Its Ancient Mediterranean Context: A Survey of Some Recent Scholarship," *Annali di storia dell'esegesi* 24 (2007): 229–94. For another perspective, see H.S. Versnel, "Some Reflections on the Relationship Magic-Religion," *Numen* 38, no. 2 (1991): 177–97.

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alphabets (see the list in Table 9).[44] While almost all of these texts are focused on mitigating the anxieties of everyday life, some of them draw on elements of institutional or textual religion to bolster their authority.[45] The amulets in P.Gascou 84, 85 and P.Kellis I Gr. 86 call on angelic figures[46]; P.Kellis VI Copt. 56 requests poison in the name of the "living God" and "Jesus, his Christ, the Nazarene"; P.Kellis I Gr. 88 employs a section from a Christian liturgical book; P.Kellis V Copt. 35 incorporates a spell in a Manichaean letter; P.Kellis I Gr. 87 calls on Thermuthis, the Egyptian serpent goddess of fertility and vegetation and Ptah, the creator, while the handbook in P.Kellis I Gr. 85b includes the Good Spirit ([Ἀγα]θον Δαίμονα) and the Great God (*megas theos*, maybe referring to a solar deity), and potentially includes the patriarch Isaac (ισαχ, perhaps to be read as Ἰσακ, in line 21).[47]

44 Among the papyri and ostraca are two examples of school exercises with the alphabet (O.Kellis 157 and P.Kellis V Copt. 10). These exercises could have derived from a school, but can also be interpret as magical amulets. See notes at their editions Worp, *Greek Ostraka from Kellis*, no. 157. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 126–27.

45 For the Graeco-Egyptian milieu, Richard Gordon argues against Frankfurter's "stereotype appropriation," by highlighting Egyptian priestly innovations and techniques to increase their personal authority. R. Gordon, "Shaping the Text: Theory and Practice in Graeco-Egyptian Malign Magic," in *Kykeon: Studies in Honour of H.S. Versnel*, ed. H.F.J. Horstmanshoff, H.W. Singor, and F.T. van Straten (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 69–111; R. Gordon, "Reporting the Marvellous: Private Divination in the Greek Magical Papyri," in *Envisioning Magic: A Princeton Seminar and Symposium*, ed. H.G. Kippenberg and P. Schäfer (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 65–92. The literature on "Christian magic" is extensive and often highlights the problems of associating texts with institutional religious categories. Boustan and Sanzo, "Christian Magicians, Jewish Magical Idioms," 217–40. On the dynamics between liturgy and magic, see J. van der Vliet, "Literature, Liturgy, Magic: A Dynamic Continuum," in *Christianity in Egypt: Literary Production and Intellectual Trends*, ed. P. Buzi and A. Camplani (Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 2011), 555–74, and the various contributions in Frankfurter, *Guide to the Study of Ancient Magic*.

46 K.A. Worp, "Miscellaneous New Greek Papyri from Kellis," in *Mélanges Jean Gascou*, ed. J.L. Fournet and A. Papaconstantinou (Paris: Association des amis du centre d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance, 2016), 478 points for example to the use of the names of Christian angels in "pagan" contexts. Angels are also called on in Iranian Manichaean incantation texts, including incantation bowls, see E. Morano, "Manichaean Middle Iranian Incantation Texts," in *Turfan Revisited: The First Century of Research into the Arts and Cultures of the Silk Road*, ed. D. Durkin-Meisterernst, et al. (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 2004), 221–27; J.D. BeDuhn, "Magical Bowls and Manichaeans," in *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, ed. M. Meyer and P.A. Mirecki (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 419–34; Burkitt, *Religion of the Manichees*, 91–92.

47 Worp, *GPK1*, 217.

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TABLE 9 List of amulets and related texts from Kellis

Text	Content	Location
P.Kellis I Gr. 85ab	Fragments of a magical handbook	House 3
P.Kellis I Gr. 86	Fever amulet	House 3
P.Kellis I Gr. 87	Fever amulet (copy of Gr. 85b?) for Pamour III	House 3
P.Kellis I Gr. 88	Amulet (?) using a liturgical text on a wooden board	House 3
P.Kellis II Gr. 91	Greek Manichaean prayer of praise (amulet?)	Street near Houses 1–3
P.Kellis II Gr. 92	Greek Manichaean hymn or amulet (?)	House 3
P.Kellis II Gr. 93	Sethian invocation/scripture (?)	House 3
P.Kellis II Gr. 94[a]	Eulogy/amulet (?) on a wooden board	House 3
P. Kellis inv. 92.35b[b]	Fragmentary amulet for Pamour III	House 3
P.Gascou 84	Amulet (folded papyrus)	House 4
P.Gascou 85	Amulet (piece of a wooden board)	House 2
P.Gascou 86	Amulet (against fever?)	House 2
P.Gascou 87	Amulet (mentioning Michael)	D/8
P.Gascou 88	Enigmatic text (magical?)	A/10/63
O.Kellis 157	Scribal exercise with alphabet and names (?)	Temple area D
TM 700788	Page of Oracle Book (inv. P96.150) with mixture of names of Greek and Egyptian gods	D/8
Unlabeled (inv. #P51)[c]	Miniature amulet text (?) in Greek	House 3
P.Kellis II Copt. 7	Sayings or amulet (?)	House 3
P.Kellis V Copt. 35	Personal (Manichaean) letter and magic spell	House 3
P.Kellis VI Copt. 56	Amulet against snake bite in a miniature papyrus codex	Temple area D/8
P.Kellis VII Copt. 126	Invocation (?)	House 4
KAB 1778–1780 (P.Kellis IV Gr. 96)[d]	Coptic lines including angelic names	House 2

a The use of hymnic texts (P.Kellis II Gr. 91, 92, 94) as amulets is suggested in Gardner, *KLT1*, 132, 134, 137, 143 and rejected by Th.S. de Bruyn, *Making Amulets Christian: Artefacts, Scribes, and Contexts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 231–2.

b Worp, *GPK1*, 218.

c Draft notes published in Gardner, *KLT2*, 137.

d Brief commentary by Bagnall, *Kellis Agricultural Account Book*, 224.

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The Manichaean families made use of amulets; Pamour and his relatives feature several times in extant texts. The amulet P.Kellis I Gr. 87, calling upon Thermuthis and Ptah, was produced from the associated handbook P.Kellis I Gr. 85ab for the sake of Pamour III and his mother Tapollo, whose name is abbreviated as Lo. The inclusion of part of the handbook's instructions in the actual amulet suggests that the scribe may have misunderstood the text.[48] The second amulet, found in the same room as the handbook, was also for the health and protection of Pamour (P.Kellis inv. 92.35b),[49] while a third amulet (P.Kellis I Gr. 86) was produced for the health of a woman called Ela.ke (otherwise unknown in the corpus). The active role of scribes in the appropriation of religious repertoires is visible in a number of documents. Amulet (?) P.Kellis I Gr. 88 contains a Christian liturgical formula for the anointing of the sick, attested in the Montserrat codex, which is appropriated and adapted to a Manichaean context.[50] The use of biblical or liturgical elements became more common in fourth-century Greek and Coptic texts, indicating that the practitioners attributed a certain authority and efficacy to these elements, which they creatively employed in the local ritual context.[51] Such local applications have been suggested for the spell in P.Kellis V Copt. 35, which invokes "the One sitting above the Cherubim and Seraphim," while the accompanying letter refers to "our Lord Paraclete".[52] At least one scholar wondered whether the authors were "active participants in the Manichaean scribal mission," and strategically used the spell to cut a woman loose from her network in order to integrate her into the local Manichaean community.[53] This speculative

48 D. Jordan, "Intrusions into the Text of the Amulet 'P. Kellis G.' I 87?," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 137 (2001): 34.

49 Worp, *GPK1*, 218.

50 C. Römer, R.W. Daniel, and K.A. Worp, "Das Gebet zur Handauflegung bei Kranken in P.Barc. 155.19–156.5 und P.Kellis I 88," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 119 (1997): 129 are careful with the Manichaean association, but note that the final lines on Christ as savior in the original document are missing in Kellis's version. Its find location in House 3 ties it closely to the Manichaean households of Kellis.

51 Frankfurter, *Religion in Roman Egypt*, 248–50; D. Frankfurter, "The Great, the Little, and the Authoritative Tradition in Magic of the Ancient World," *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 16, no. 1 (2014): 11–30; Frankfurter, *Christianizing Egypt*, 92–100; Th.S. de Bruyn, "P. Ryl. III.471: A Baptismal Anointing Formula Used as an Amulet," *Journal of Theological Studies* 57, no. 1 (2006): 108; A. Luijendijk, *Forbidden Oracles? The Gospel of the Lots of Mary* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014).

52 Τὸν καθήμενον ἐπάνω Χερουβὶν καὶ Σαρουφὶν and ⲛⲉⲕⲙ̄ⲡⲛ̄ϫⲁⲓⲥ ⲡⲁⲣⲁⲕⲗⲏⲧⲟⲥ P.Kellis V Copt. 35.2–3 and 26–27.

53 P.A. Mirecki, "Manichaeism, Scribal Magic and Papyrus Kellis 35," in *Gnostica et Manichaica*, ed. L. Cirillo and M. Knuppel (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012), 143–4. *Contra* previous interpretations in which Mirecki, Gardner and Alcock suggested that "they

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reconstruction, however, holds no ground, as there is no explicit evidence for religious conversion at all. The placement of the amulet at the top of the papyrus and the existence of empty spots for the client's name imply that the recipient needed a specific spell that was "traditional, tested, and efficacious" and could be applied to new situations and customers.[54] One sentence seems to suggest a certain unease about the nature of the texts, as Ouales stresses that the spell should not be brought to the attention of brother Kallikles. This Kallikles may have been an ecclesiastical leader who disapproved of spells, as normative Manichaean texts contained polemic against "magic," but other scenarios cannot be excluded.[55]

The horoscopes, calendars of good and bad days, and amulets show the continuing interest in celestial powers and specific rituals in Kellis until the end of the fourth century.[56] Spells and amulets were collected and requested to be sent by people associated with Houses 1–3 – with and without alterations that reflected group-specific terminology. Even though some members of the Christian and Manichaean institutional elite may have frowned upon these practices, and Roman emperors labored to forbid them, Kellites continued to appeal to celestial powers, using elements from various repertoires to protect themselves from harm.

are not driven by particular evangelical fervour." P.A. Mirecki, I. Gardner, and A. Alcock, "Magical Spell, Manichaean Letter," in *Emerging from Darkness: Studies in the Recovery of Manichaean Sources*, ed. J.D. BeDuhn and P.A. Mirecki (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 30.

54 Mirecki, Gardner, and Alcock, "Magical Spell, Manichaean Letter," 9. See also M. Dickie, *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World* (London: Routledge, 2001), 303–4; K. Dosoo, *Rituals of Apparition in the Theban Magical Library* (PhD dissertation, Macquarie University, 2014), 164–5; Love, *Code-Switching with the Gods*, 273–79.

55 See 1 Keph 6 31.25–26, CMC 137–40; Mirecki, Gardner, and Alcock, "Magical Spell, Manichaean Letter," 10–11 suggest that the author of P.Kellis V Copt. 35 may have understood the prohibition of "magic" as referring to Zoroastrian ritual only.

56 Apart from the various texts with horoscopes and spells, the most exotic discovery was a fourteen-week-old fetus found in an upper room of House 4, wrapped in linen, and found among the wall debris of an upper room. According to Frankfurter, the extensive wrapping of this fetus resembles the wrapping of amulets rather than the treatment of mummies. D. Frankfurter, "Fetus Magic and Sorcery Fears in Roman Egypt," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 46 (2006): 43. His interpretation is called into question by R.W. Daniel, "P.Mich. VI 423–424 without Magic," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 200 (2016): 389–97. While fetuses are not common in spells, one papyrus describes how a fetus was thrown toward a victim as part of an aggressive curse-spell. A connection with the fetus in House 4 is, however, improbable. A less spectacular interpretation of the situation in House 4 would be that the fetus was placed in the wall, awaiting burial, without the intention to serve as a hidden spell or amulet.

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Christian Institutions and Repertoire

If the number of church buildings is any indication of Christianization, the Dakhleh Oasis was profoundly Christianized during the fourth century. The remains of ten church buildings have been found, three of which were located in Kellis.[57] These church buildings and occasional references to ecclesiastical offices in papyri reflect the introduction of Christianity to the oasis well before the arrival of Manichaeism.

At walking distance from Houses 1–3 and directly next to House 5 stood two churches: a large basilica church and a smaller house church. A third church was found closer to the temple complex and seemed to have had a funerary function (the West Church). The excavations of the Small East Church revealed a domestic unit with major architectural modifications that facilitated its usage as a church. Benches were added to the walls, cupboards were built, and the entire room was gypsum coated. Between the benches on the south wall, an apse with two side chambers was constructed and framed by three arches with pilasters. The apse was decorated with geometrical motifs, and beneath those decorations was a slightly raised platform that could be screened off by wooden doors.[58] Below one of the niches on the side was a decorated

57 I will use the designation "church" for convenience's sake, to distinguish these buildings from the domestic architecture. It has to be borne in mind that these buildings had a wide range of usages, not all explicitly religious or "Christian." As we will see, it is difficult to discern what kinds of Christian practices were performed in these spaces. Apart from the church buildings at Kellis, there was one at 'Ain al-Sebil and one at 'Ain al-Gedida, and there were two at Dayr Abu Matta, Dayr al-Makak (although maybe from a later date), Amheida, and Mut al Kharab. Bowen, "Christianity in Dakhleh Oasis," 367. On the church in Ain El-Gedida, see N. Aravecchia, *Christians of the Western Desert in Late Antiquity: The Fourth-Century Church Complex of Ain El-Gedida, Upper Egypt* (PhD. dissertation: University of Minnesota Digital Conservancy, 2009), 108–9. The fourth-century church from Amheida is discussed in Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 119–30 (Aravecchia). For the basilica at Mut, see G.E. Bowen, "Christianity at Mut Al-Kharab (Ancient Mothis), Dakhleh Oasis, Egypt," in *The Cultural Manifestations of Religious Experience. Studies in Honour of Boyo G. Ockinga*, ed. C. Di Biase-Dyson and L. Donovan (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2017), 241–48. For Dayr al Malak, see G.E. Bowen and C.A. Hope, "The Church at Dayr al-Malak in Dakhleh Oasis," in *Oasis Papers 9*, ed. G.E. Bowen and C.A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2019), 419–430. For 'Ain al-Sabil, see K.A. Bayoumy and M.M. Masoud, "'Ain al-Sabil in Dakhleh Oasis," in *Oasis Papers 9*, ed. G.E. Bowen and C.A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2019), 354–365.

58 G.E. Bowen, "The Small East Church at Ismant el-Kharab," in *Oasis Papers 3*, ed. G.E. Bowen and C.A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003), 159 with photographs. See the description of the decoration in Knudstad and Frey, "Kellis: The Architectural Survey," 205–7. On the Large East Church, P. Grossmann, "Typological Considerations on the Large East Church

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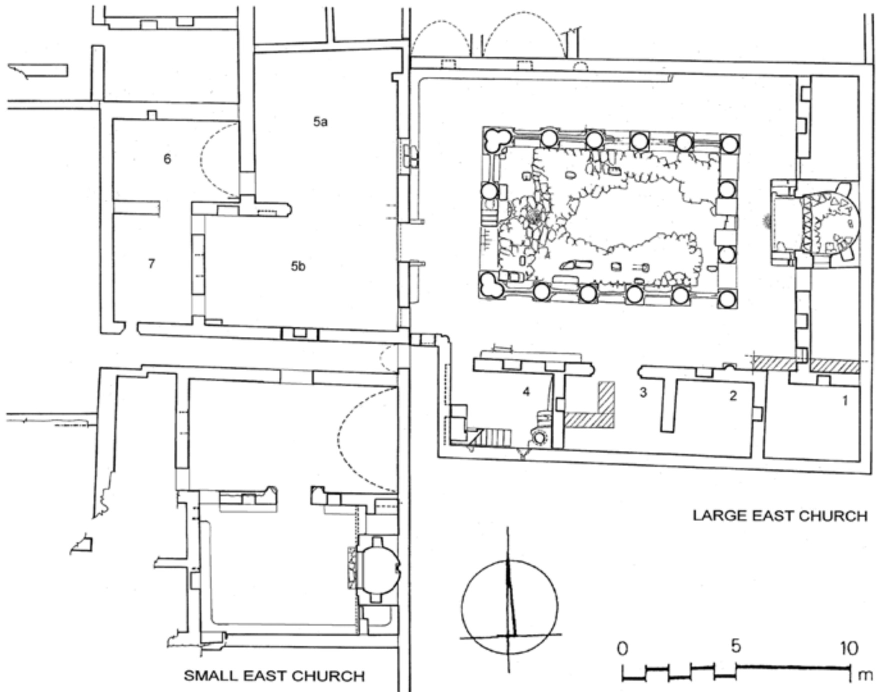

FIGURE 11 Plan of the East Churches (Area A)
COURTESY OF THE DAKHLEH OASIS PROJECT AND COLIN A. HOPE

rectangular panel with a *crux ansata* depicted.[59] The second large room of the modified house was easily accessible from the main room by two doorways. It may have functioned as a separate liturgical room for catechumens who were not allowed to see the rituals being performed, though they probably received oral instructions from the preacher in the other room. Alternatively, it could have been used as a communal dining area.[60]

at Ismant el-Kharab," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994–1995 to 1998–1999 Field Seasons*, ed. C.A. Hope and G.E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002), 153–56.

59 The plaster of the large East church also revealed the remains of a *crux ansata*, while there are no decorations preserved in the West Church due to higher erosion on this edge of the site. G.E. Bowen, "The Crux Ansata in Early Christian Iconography: Evidence from Dakhleh and Kharga Oases," in *Le myrte et la rose: Mélanges offerts à Françoise Dunand par ses élèves, collègues et amis*, ed. G. Tallet and C. Zivie-Coche (Montpellier: CENIM, 2014), 291–303.

60 Bowen, "The Small East Church," 162.

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As it predates the Large East Church next door, the Small East Church is best understood as a modified house-church. Its layout resembles Early Christian church structures like the *domus ecclesia* at Dura-Europos. Numismatic evidence indicates that building modifications occurred not long after 306 CE, and the building continued to be used until about the first half of the fourth century.[61] The last years of its usage were contemporaneous with the Large East Church, which was constructed in the second or third decade of the fourth century, suggesting a sharp increase in the number of Christians and a change in their public visibility, ostensibly caused by the changing legal status of Christianity.[62]

The Large East Church was built on an east–west axis and comprised a central nave with an apse and two aisles on all sides. The nave contained benches alongside two walls, opposite the raised bema platform, and could hold about two hundred people.[63] Including an apse in the architectural layout became one of the prime characteristics of Early Christian architecture, and is therefore significant. Other sites in the oasis also included early examples of basilicas. In Ain el-Gedida, the apse was even built on the public road, leading to more complex (and thus highly visible) infrastructure. The apse above the platform of the Large East Church was roofed with a semicircular dome and decorated with at least one *crux ansata* on the edge of the apse.[64] Several fragments of painted glass were found among the floor debris, and their depictions

61 This dating is based on coin finds. G.E. Bowen, "Coins as Tools for Dating the Foundation of the Large East Church at Kellis: Problems and a Possible Solution," in *Oasis Papers 6*, ed. R.S. Bagnall, P. Davoli, and C.A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2012), 426–7. For a recent discussion of other early church buildings, see E. Adams, *The Earliest Christian Meeting Places: Almost Exclusively Houses?* (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2016), 89–112. For a critique on the category of "domus ecclesia," see K. Sessa, "'Domus Ecclesiae': Rethinking a Category of 'Ante-Pacem' Christian Space," *The Journal of Theological Studies, New Series* 60 no. 1 (2009): 90–108.

62 Its early date suggests that it may have served as the central and primary basilica of the village, modeled on the early basilicas built at cities in the Nile valley like Antinoopolis or Hermopolis. G.E. Bowen, "The Fourth-Century Churches at Ismant el-Kharab," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994–1995 to 1998–1999 Field Seasons*, ed. C.A. Hope and G.E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002), 84.

63 Other fragments with *crux ansata* figures were found on a pair of engaged columns. Bowen, "The Spread of Christianity in Egypt," 18.

64 Bowen, "Fourth-Century Churches," 71. Similar gypsum coating was found in the fourth-century church at 'Ain al-Sabil, a hamlet nearby. In fact, may architectural features resemble the Large East Church, suggesting that the former may have been modeled on the basillica of Kellis. Bayoumy and Masoud, "'Ain al-Sabil in Dakhleh Oasis," 358.

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are said to be reminiscent of biblical iconography.[65] An extended structure located west of the central nave comprised four rooms, one of which had two ovens, suggesting that dining and food preparation took place a short distance from the meeting area. A similar space with benches and a hearth used for communal meal gatherings was also found at the West Church, close to the main temple. This mud-brick building was built during the mid-fourth century and remained in use until the 390s. It consisted of two rooms with benches along the walls. One of the rooms had an apse with a slightly raised bema platform, oriented toward the east. In contrast to the two other churches, the West Church had a funerary function, which has led to speculation about a potential connection to Manichaeism (see chapter 6).[66]

The papyri also attest to the churches and their officials. The KAB mentions a church (ἐκ[κ]λησία) that receives expenditure from the *dapane* account (KAB 880, 883), and direct disbursements of wheat are also given "to the church for the bishop" (εἰς ἐκ[κ]λησία τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ KAB 620–1). The bishop is mentioned once again when he receives jujubes (KAB 706). None of these instances indicate whether he or his church were based in Kellis or elsewhere in the oasis.[67] The bishop mentioned in P.Kellis VII Copt. 128 may have been the local bishop of the emerging Christian church. Recently identified historical texts in Ethiopic manuscripts include Perikles the bishop of the Great Oasis in the lists of Egyptian bishops consecrated by the "patriarchs" of Alexandria.[68]

65 Bowen, "Fourth-Century Churches," 84. On glass in Kellis, see C. Marchini, "Glass from the 1993 Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1992–1993 and 1993–1994 Field Seasons*, ed. C.A. Hope and A.J. Mills (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999), 75–82. Images of these "biblical" themes have not (yet) been published, but at least one is announced as "a child swathed" or a "nativity scene." Thurston, *Secrets of the Sands*, 297.

66 Bowen, "Fourth-Century Churches," 78. Among the objects found were ceramic vessels, coins, mud jar sealings, ostraca, and a fragment of inscribed and uninscribed papyri. These papyri have not yet been edited, but G. Bowen assures me they are of an economic nature and do not further inform us about the nature of the church (Bowen, personal communication, May 2016). The church at Amheida (Trimithis) is the second example of a funerary church in the Oasis.

67 Bagnall suggests that the bishop was located in Mothis. Bagnall, *KAB*, 81. Wipszycka stresses that the centralization of the institutional church and the increasing power of the Alexandrian bishops took place during the second half of the third century. By the fourth century, therefore, a network of bishoprics was in place. E. Wipszycka, "The Institutional Church," in *Egypt in the Byzantine World, 300–700*, ed. R.S. Bagnall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 333.

68 A. Bausi and A. Camplani, "The History of the Episcopate of Alexandria (HEpA): Editio Minor of the Fragments Preserved in the Aksumite Collection and in the Codex Veronensis LX (58)," *Adamantius* 22 (2016), 274–5; C. Balconi, "Tre ordini di consegna inediti provenienti dalla Grande Oasi," *Aegyptus* 90 (2010), 41–51.

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Apart from this bishop, there are about six presbyters mentioned in the KAB: Pakous, Psenpnouthes, Psais, Psennouphis, Valerius, and Timotheos.[69] One deacon is listed as receiving jujubes.[70] While their names and the disbursements are recorded, no further information about these individuals is available. All seem to have been involved in everyday economic transactions with the estate, but not necessarily as representatives of the local churches.[71] One wonders to what extent an institutionalized Christian church structure can be inferred from these titles. Presbyters feature not only as tenants in the account book, but also as witnesses and scribes of legal documents. Recall the prominent role of the priest and deacons in the declaration to the *dux*, cited in the introduction of this chapter. Another reference to a priest refers to the more specific "priest of the catholic church" (πρ̣ε̣σ̣βυ[τ]έ̣ρου καθ[ο]λικῆς ἐκκλησίας P.Kellis I Gr. 24.3, cf. the title in a lease document from 364 CE and an agreement from 337 CE; P.Kellis I Gr. 32.21 and 58.8).[72]

Various documents from the Roman period houses divulge Christian repertoire that is sometimes closely associated with Manichaean texts. A copy of Psalm 9 in Greek was found in the domestic unit close to the Temple (TM 699684 and 699685), a personal letter with Christian overtones was found in the temple area (P.Kellis VII Copt. 128), and a Christian invocation (?) was found in House 4 (P.Kellis VII Copt. 126). This latter house also contained a letter from two presbyters, Apa Besas and Agathemeros, who address their "blessed father" Stephanos in strong Christian vocabulary, while Hor "the subdeacon" (ϩⲱⲣ

69 Pakous (KAB 142 if you follow Bagnall's reconstruction), Psenpnouthes (KAB 575–6, 1155–6 and 1179–80 only calling him "father"), Psais (KAB 1315 and possibly again without his title 1179–80), Psennouphis (KAB 96 designated only as "father"), Valerius (KAB 707, designated only as "father") and Timotheos (KAB 1307, designated only as "father").

70 Petros *diakonos* (KAB 1576), presumably not to be identified with Petros *monachos*. Ostraca from the fourth-century found at ʿAin al-Sabil, close to Kellis, mention a deacon Tithoes.

71 This is not unremarkable. The documentary sources appear to have the same selection bias as the literary texts that inform us about the institutional church. Clergy are widely attested on and off duty in the papyri. A. Luijendijk, "On and Beyond Duty: Christian Clergy at Oxyrhynchus (C. 250–400)," in *Beyond Priesthood: Religious Entrepreneurs and Innovators in the Roman Empire*, ed. R. Gordon, G. Petridou, and J. Rüpke (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), 103–26.

72 More precise dating of the spread of Christianity in the Oasis is difficult. The earliest documentary attestation of Christianity is dated 319 CE (PUG 20, P.Med. Inv. 68.82) See Wagner, *Les oasis d'Égypte*, 327–8. French translation in D.C. Gofas, "Quelques observations sur un papyrus contenant un contrat de société (PU. G II appendice I)," in *Studi in onore fi Arnaldo Biscardi S.J.*, ed. F. Pastori (Milano: Istituto editoriale Cisalpino, 1982), 499–505. The text is a contract between two parties for transportation and commerce in the oasis. The formula in which God is called on for help identifies them as Christians.

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ⲡϩⲩⲡⲟⲇⲓⲁⲕⲟⲛⲟⲥ) adds his postscript on the verso (P.Kellis VII Copt. 124).[73] The most remarkable document from House 4 is a Greek letter written by a church official (?) to several priests about the regalia that had been taken from him. Written in a highly skilled hand and dated to the second half of the fourth century, the letter alludes to biblical scriptures and uses phrases that connote Jewishness or Christianness, but never correspond to known religious texts. The remarkable features of the text (including a reference to the prophet Jeremias, an unknown priestly office, and a list of extravagant treasures) make it impossible to determine a Manichaean or a "catholic" Christian background; the text seems to stem from a more fluid setting that does not correspond to well-known religious group classifications.[74]

The tantalizing reference to the prophet Jeremias, as well as the Greek copy of Psalm 9, reminds us that Jews may have lived in Kellis as well. Due to the process of Christianization, they became invisible, as biblical names were used by Christians as well. One wooden board from House 3 containing a list of money includes a concentration of marked biblical names that were less common: Iakob, Rachel, Johannes, and Martha (or Maria) (P.Kellis I Gr. 61). Other texts include marked names like Mouses (KAB 900) and Elias (e.g. P.Kellis I Gr. 39), which may have carried either Jewish or Christian associations. Unfortunately, it is not possible to define more precisely the religious self-understanding of the parents who gave their children such biblical names.[75]

73 P.Kellis VII Copt. 124.v40. For this ecclesiastical position and the ἀρχιδιάκονος mentioned in an unpublished Greek document from House 4, see Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 276; E. Wipszycka, "Les ordres mineurs dans l'église d'Égypte du IVᵉ au VIIIᵉ siècle," *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 23 (1993): 181–215.

74 I. Gardner and K.A. Worp, "A Most Remarkable Fourth Century Letter in Greek, Recovered from House 4 at Ismant el-Kharab," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 205 (2018): 127–42.

75 Bowen has attempted to pinpoint the earliest evidence for Christianity in the oasis through Christian names with patronyms. She tentatively suggests the presence of Christians in the village from about the 250s CE. Bowen, "Some Observations," 174. Worp's discussion of the relationship between the three church buildings and Christian names in ostraca and papyri shows the problematic assumptions behind the notion of Christian names. K.A. Worp, "Christian Personal Names in Documents from Kellis (Dakhleh Oasis)," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 195 (2015): 193–99. On the possibility of counting the number of Christian names and using them to discuss the Christianization of Egypt, see the following exchange. M. Depauw and W. Clarysse, "How Christian Was Fourth Century Egypt? Onomastic Perspectives on Conversion," *Vigiliae Christianae* 67, no. 4 (2013): 407–35; D. Frankfurter, "Onomastic Statistics and the Christianization of Egypt: A Response to Depauw and Clarysse," *Vigiliae Christianae* 68, no. 3 (2014): 284–89; M. Depauw and W. Clarysse, "Christian Onomastics: A Response to Frankfurter," *Vigiliae Christianae* 69, no. 3 (2015): 327–29. In his most recent contribution, Frankfurter interprets

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We cannot determine who read the biblical texts that were found in the Roman period houses. Two copies of New Testament texts were found among Manichaean texts in House 3 (P.Kellis II Copt. 6 and 9, found together with fragments of a Manichaean psalm).[76] These sections from *The Letter to the Romans* and *The Letter to the Hebrews* could have been read by Manichaeans as well as Christians (see chapter 7). A Greek legal document from House 3 makes an explicit reference to Christianity. In the manumission document for an enslaved woman, freed in the presence of a priest (the "most reverend father Psekes,"), the author boasts that his motives stem from his "exceptional Christianity, under Zeus, Earth, and Sun" (ὑπερβολὴν χ[ρι]στιανότητος ἀ̣πε|λευθερωκέ̣ναι σε ὑ̣π̣ὸ Δία Γῆν Ἥλιον P.Kellis I Gr. 48.4–5).[77] The combination of Christianity with the traditional legal formula "under Zeus, Earth, and Sun" illustrates the idiosyncrasies of everyday religion, even in the face of nascent Christian institutions.

Manichaeans and the Roman Administration

The Kellis letters have frequently been considered against the background of Roman legislation and narratives of religious persecution, describing House 3

Christian names as blessings given to children. Frankfurter, *Christianizing Egypt*, 5 and 38–9.

76 It has been long known that Manichaeans read biblical literature and engaged in extensive (allegorical) biblical interpretation. Alexander Böhlig's 1947 dissertation already surveyed a large part of this material. *Die Bibel bei den Manichäern und verwandte Studien* (Leiden: Brill 2012). More recent overviews of Old and New Testament citations have been published by Nils Arne Pedersen, *The New Testament Gospels in Manichaean Tradition: The Sources in Syriac, Greek, Coptic, Middle Persian, Parthian, Sogdian, Bactrian, New Persian, and Arabic* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2020). It remains, however, fundamental to note that the biblical texts, "came to be subordinated to Mani's own compositions as Manichaeism developed after him." J.D. BeDuhn, "Manichaean Biblical Interpretation," in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Biblical Interpretation*, ed. P.M. Blowers and P.W. Martens (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 399.

77 The editor notes the possible presence of monks (line 11), which would be significant if this text was a "manumissio in ecclesia." Worp, *GPK1*, 142–3. The combination of the traditional formula used in manumissions (E.g. P.Oxy. IV 722.6) with Christian elements is also attested in P.Edmonstone 7–9, discussed in J.H.F. Dijkstra, *Philae and the End of Ancient Egyptian Religion: A Regional Study of Religious Transformation (298–642 CE)* (Leuven: Peeters, 2008), 58–59. Another explicit reference to Christ was found in a graffito on a colum at 'Ain al-Sabil: "(There is) one god who aids Alexander, *armatura*, slave of Jesus Christ." Bayoumy and Masoud, "'Ain al-Sabil in Dakhleh Oasis," 362 (appendix two by Andrew Conner). At Mothis, a column base was found inscribed with the word χρηστιανε. Bowen, "Christianity in Dakhleh Oasis," 375.

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as a "safe house" or "an ideal haven" for Manichaeans fleeing persecution in the Nile valley.[78] Earlier, the editors of the Coptic papyri described the personal letters as "written against a backdrop of persecution (ⲇⲓⲱⲅⲙⲟⲥ 22.73) in their authors' lives."[79] Several elements in the letters, such as the reference to ⲇⲓⲱⲅⲙⲟⲥ in P.Kellis V Copt. 22, seem to support a reconstruction of a sectarian persecuted community. Other archaeological and papyrological finds, however, cast doubts on the extent of religious persecution or maltreatment. They show the presence of the Roman army in the oasis – which makes it unlikely that Manichaeans would have been invisible to the Roman administration – as well as patronage from one of the local elites. The anxiety and unease expressed in some of the letters may have derived from social and economic difficulties, rather than events aligned with anti-Manichaean Roman legislation.

With the incorporation of Egypt into the Roman Empire, the western desert became part of the overarching military structure of the Romans, with permanent military presence after Diocletian's reign.[80] The *Notitia Dignitatum*, a list of military units, mentions a cohort of foot soldiers at Mut and a cavalry unit at Trimithis (also mentioned in the KAB).[81] The remains of several Roman

78 "[W]hile there is nothing to suggest from their private letters that theirs was a community hiding from the long arm of the law, the remoteness of the oasis would certainly have helped a Manichaean community to last longer than in other parts of Roman Egypt." S.N.C. Lieu, "The Diffusion, Persecution and Transformation of Manichaeism in Late Antiquity and Pre-Modern China," in *Conversion in Late Antiquity: Christianity, Islam, and Beyond: Papers from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Sawyer Seminar, University of Oxford, 2009–2010*, ed. D. Schwartz, N. McLynn, and A. Papaconstantinou (Burlington: Ashgate, 2015), 113; S.N.C. Lieu, "The Self-Identity of the Manichaeans in the Roman East," *Mediterranean Archeology* 11 (1998): 207, "the rescript of Diocletian might have the effect of driving Manichaeans in Upper Egypt to seek shelter in remote oases like that of Dakhleh." N.A. Pedersen, "Die Manichäer in ihrer Umwelt: Ein Beitrag zur Diskussion über die Soziologie der Gnostiker," in *Zugänge zur Gnosis: Akten zur Tagung der patristischen Arbeitsgemeinschaft vom 02.–05.01.2011 in Berlin-Spandau*, ed. J. van Oort and C. Markschies (Leuven: Peeters, 2013), 270. Jean Daniel Dubois speculates that the Manichaeans could have been deported to the oasis during the persecution of Diocletian. J.D. Dubois, "L'implantation des manichéens en Égypte," in *Les communautés religieuses dans le monde gréco-romain*, ed. N. Belayche (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 295.

79 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 81; Followed by C. Römer, "Manichaeism and Gnosticism in the Papyri," in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology* ed. R.S. Bagnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 642.

80 Bagnall points out that the construction of military sites during the late 280s CE is found all over Egypt. Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 172 (Bagnall).

81 KAB 793, 1263, 1407. Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 170 (Bagnall). cf. Wagner, *Les oasis d'Egypte*, 375–77. Detachments from other units included the Tentyrites and the Legio II Traiana (both mentioned in ostraca from Trimithis) and the horse-mounted archers at Mothis (ostraca found at Ain el-Gedida). R. Ast and R.S. Bagnall, "New Evidence for the Roman

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fortresses can be seen throughout the oasis, one of which was even used by British soldiers during the First World War.[82] The presence of Manichaeans in the Great Oasis was therefore hardly a result of them fleeing persecution in the Nile valley and living secluded lives on the periphery of the Roman Empire. In fact, a fourth-century document found in House 4 (P.Gascou 67, an irrigation contract from 368 CE) addresses Flavius Potammon, an honorably discharged veteran. This former member of the military lived in one of the houses that contained at least one Manichaean psalm.[83] Although we do not know when this Manichaean psalm was left there, it seems highly unlikely that Flavius Potammon was unaware of the presence of Manichaeans in his village – or even his own house. The only indication of tension between inhabitants of Kellis and the military is the side reference in a Coptic letter to someone who has been attacked on the road and is now looked after, "lest the commander do anything evil to him."[84] Far from being evidence of religious persecution, this passage attests to the prevailing tension that ancient villagers experienced in all facets of life: the harvest could be spoiled, neighbors could act violently, someone could cast a spell on you, and the price for daily necessities could increase. Manichaean families, just like their neighbors, made use of existing social, legal, and religious strategies to mitigate these anxieties.

Pamour and his relatives appear several times in Greek legal documents that concern conflict situations. None of these situations appear to have involved

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Garrison of Trimithis," *Tyche: Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte, Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 30 (2015): 1–4.

82 At El-Deir, reported in Jackson, *At Empire's Edge*, 185. At Dakhleh a fortress was located at Qasr al Halakeh, at Qasr al-Qasaba and al-Qasr. The military perspective on the oasis is discussed in A.L. Boozer, "Frontiers and Borderlands in Imperial Perspectives: Exploring Rome's Egyptian Frontier," *American Journal of Archaeology* 117 (2013): 283. The work on the Al-Qasr fortress is discussed in P. Kucera, "Al-Qasr: The Roman Castrum of Dakhleh Oasis," in *Oasis Papers 6*, ed. R.S. Bagnall, P. Davoli, and C.A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2012), 305–16; I. Gardner, "Coptic Ostraka from Qasr Al-Dakhleh," in *Oasis Papers 6*, ed. R.S. Bagnall, P. Davoli, and C.A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2012), 471–4. On the Kharga forts, R.S. Bagnall, "The Camp at Hibis," in *Essays and Texts in Honor of J. David Thomas*, ed. T. Gagos and R.S. Bagnall (Oakville: American Society of Papyrologists, 2001), 3–10; C. Rossi, "Controlling the Borders of the Empire: The Distribution of Late-Roman 'Forts' in the Kharga Oasis," in *Oasis Papers 6*, ed. R.S. Bagnall, P. Davoli, and C.A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2013), 331–36.

83 This document derives from House 4, room 4, but a second reference to an honourably discharged veteran is found in an unpublished document in room 2, where also the documents of Tithoes and Pausanias were found. Worp, "Miscellaneous New Greek Papyri from Kellis," 438.

84 .. ϩⲓⲛⲁⲥ ϫⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉ ⲡⲉⲡ̣ⲣ̣ⲉ̣ⲡⲟⲥⲓ ⲉⲣ ⲗⲁⲩ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲑⲟⲟⲩ ⲛⲁϥ P.Kellis VII Copt. 127.37–38. See the *praepositus pagi* in P.Kellis I Gr. 27.3.

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activated Manichaeanness. On the contrary, Pamour and his family participate in *unmarked* situations, out of their identities as inhabitants of Kellis. In the first decades of the fourth century, Pamouris son of Psais, from the village of Kellis (Pamour I?), complains to the *praeses Thebaidos* about Psa-s, a powerful man from Kellis, who stole Pamouris's donkey (P.Kellis I Gr. 20). In another petition to a local magistrate, he complains that Sois son of Akoutis, *komarch*, and an anonymous son of Psenamounis assaulted his wife (P.Kellis I Gr. 21 from 321 CE). These letters show that Manichaeans could call for official protection and participate without hesitation in the legal structure of Roman Egypt. The inclusion of Pamour III in a similar list of thirty-three inhabitants of Kellis complaining about violence who address their concerns to the provincial dux of the Thebaid (P.Kellis I Gr. 24 from 352 CE) consolidates this conclusion. The Manichaean's excellent social connections are also exhibited in a legal appeal against (or *via*?) Kleoboulos (P.Kellis V Copt. 20.40–42). The contextual information is sparse, but it appears that brother Sarmate (otherwise unknown in the corpus)[85] petitions an imperial military officer (the *comes*) for Kleoboulos's return in order to "cause to be given (back), the things of Matthaios that had been taken."[86] Why the military officer was called on as a mediator is unknown, but maybe it had to do with Kleoboulos's position as the *logistes* of the Great Oasis (P.Kellis I Gr. 25).[87] Whatever might have happened to Matthaios, the fragment adds to the impression that Manichaeans held a strong social position with at least some connections in the Roman administration. They acted as if they had nothing to conceal.

One of the underlying reasons for their friendly relations with the regional administration was the social position these families enjoyed in village society. Evidence for Manichaeans in well-to-do layers of village society includes a Greek letter from Pegosh to his brother Pamour III about their "son Horos," who served as a liturgist in Kellis. Pegosh reproaches Pamour for his lack of

85 Except in P.Kellis I Gr. 30 as a patronym.

86 ⲡⲥⲁⲛ ⲥⲁⲣⲙⲁⲧⲉ ⲥⲙ̣ⲙⲉ ⲙⲡⲕⲱⲛⲁⲏⲥ ⲁϥⲣⲕⲉⲗ̣ⲉⲩⲉ ⲁⲧⲣⲉ ⲕⲗⲉⲟⲃⲟⲩⲗⲉ ⲕⲁⲧⲟⲩ ⲛϥⲧⲣⲟⲩϯ ⲛ̣ⲁ̣ⲙ̣[ⲁⲑ]ⲁⲓⲟⲥ ⲉⲧⲁⲩϥⲓⲧⲟⲩ (P.Kellis V Copt. 20.40–42). The editors initially translated "petitioned Pkonaes (?)" and noted the alternative ⲕⲱⲛⲏⲥ, in which the superlinear ⲏ replaced the ⲁ and the ⲛ was used for ⲙ. The ⲱ instead of the ⲟ is also attested in P.Ryl.Copt. 404 (seventh or eighth century).

87 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 171. The sequence of interactions, Sarmate requesting the help of a high military official to approach the *logistes*, who in turn has to order (?) Kleoboulos to return, is embedded in the patronage ties of the local community. Who else than a military official could put pressure on the *logistes*? Without situational information, it is hard to establish what exactly befell Matthaios. Are his "things" stolen? Is this why he does not even have sandals (P.Kellis V Copt. 20.58)? Is Kleoboulos a Roman official or the suspected thief? See references to other people with this name in Worp, *GPK1*, 77.

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involvement. Instead of coming to the oasis or sending fleece, purple dye, or linen cloth, he is away, and "appeared heavy-headed."[88] Presumably, Horos was appointed to a compulsory service, like tax collection – a system that gradually became coercive instead of honorific and voluntary.[89] The participation and support of an uncle may have been of critical value, as the scribes of the village archive would have selected people to be financially responsible for their liturgical service. Again, we see that this family was of substantial means; otherwise, the scribes (or the *komarchs*) would have been held responsible for the financial burden of their own liturgical office.[90]

Wealth and social standing were not enough. The relatively secure position of the Manichaean families in the oasis may have been due to the patronage of a former magistrate: Pausanias son of Valerius. Pausanias's prominent social position and support for some of the Manichaean families is revealed by following prosopographical connections and reading various texts in relation to each other.[91] The most direct connection is found in a Greek legal contract from 333 CE, in which Pausanias grants a plot of land in the eastern section of Kellis, perhaps directly north of House 3, to Aurelius Psais, son of Pamour (P.Kellis I Gr. 38 a and b).[92] The phrase used for the donation, namely "irrevocable gift" (χάρις ἀναφαίρετος), is noteworthy, since it is usually only employed within family interactions or in the "quasi-sale" of property to a minor.[93] I have argued elsewhere that the personal nature of the gift and the asymmetrical social relationship of the two parties suggest that this interaction took place within an enduring, reciprocal relationship of exchange.[94] While this particular

88 καὶ καταλαμβάνω ὑμᾶς ταχέως ἐπὶ το[ῦτο, ὡς] γ̣ὰ̣ρ̣ βαρυκ̣έ̣φ̣αλος̣ ἐφάνης. P.Kellis I Gr. 72.43.

89 The power and appointment of the komarchs. Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 133–8 and 57–60. About compulsory service, see A. Monson, *From the Ptolemies to the Romans: Political and Economic Change in Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 236–46; N. Lewis, *The Compulsory Public Services of Roman Egypt* (Firenze: Gonnelli, 1982), 88–89.

90 Monson, *From the Ptolemies to the Romans*, 244.

91 The following paragraphs closely follow M. Brand, "'For Only Our Lord the Paraclete Is Competent to Praise You as You Deserve' (P.Kellis I Gr. 63): Identifying a Roman-Egyptian Patron of the Manichaeans in Kellis," in *Manichaeism and Early Christianity*, ed. J. van Oort (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 128–151. This identification is also put forward in Gardner, *Founder of Manichaeism*, 101.

92 Worp, *GPK1*, 109.

93 R.S. Bagnall and D.D. Obbink, eds., *Colombia Papyri X* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 107 in the commentary on P.Col. X. 274. Discussed in Teigen, *The Manichaean Church in Kellis*, 154.

94 Brand, "'For Only Our Lord the Paraclete'". Pausanias may have given another plot of land to the same Aurelius Psais son of Pamour, or his father Aurelius Pamour (P.Kellis I Gr. 4, from 331 CE), indicating a longstanding relationship.

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Greek contract only describes Pausanias as a "former magistrate of Mothis" (the largest town in the oasis), another petition (P.Gascou 69) reveals that he was the *strategos* and *riparius* of the Great Oasis between 326 and 333 CE.[95] In fact, a series of documents (see Table 10) attests to Pausanias's active role in the Oases; he pays on behalf of the city council, intervenes in family disputes, and organizes local affairs with individuals depending on him (particularly Gena, who addresses him as "my master," "your nobility," and "your goodness," P.Kellis I Gr. 5).[96]

TABLE 10 List of documents associated with Pausanias

Document	Description and find location
P.Kellis I Gr. 4	Contract of cession. Parcel given to Aurelius P – (House 2, 331 CE)
P.Kellis I Gr. 5–6	Correspondence with Gena (House 2)
P.Kellis I Gr. 38ab	Grant of a plot of land to Psais (House 3)
P.Kellis I Gr. 63	Manichaean letter addressed to Pausanias and Pisistratos (House 3)
P.Gascou 69 and 71	Petition to Pausanias the *strategos* and a tax receipt from 337 CE (D/8)

95 Worp suggests that Optatus in P.Gascou 70 was the precursor of Pausanias. Worp, "Miscellaneous New Greek Papyri from Kellis," 447. On the role of the *strategos* in Late Antiquity see A. Jördens, "Government, Taxation, and Law," in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*, ed. C. Riggs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 58–59; J. Rowlandson, "Administration and Law: Graeco-Roman," in *A Companion to Ancient Egypt*, ed. A.B. Lloyd (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 237–54.

96 Additional documents may have been associated with Pausanias and his network in Kellis, but the prosopographical connections are too weak to establish a full identification. For example, a Pausanias features in O.Kellis 137, where Pchoirus is acting on his behalf. The Nestorius mentioned in this ostracon is otherwise only known from a letter by Pegosh (P.Kellis I Gr. 72), offering a potential connection to the Manichaean community. Likewise, one wonders whether the Valerius in a Greek document from 355 CE is to be identified with Pausanias's father, especially since he uses a mixture of religious repertoires (P.Kellis I Gr. 48.4–5). Unfortunately, the date of the document seems too late to inform us about the father of a strategos in the 330s. See, Brand, "'For Only Our Lord the Paraclete'". I do not share Teigen's reconstruction linking Pausanias to Kome (O.Kellis 85) and, therefore, to the monk Timotheos (KAB 1079–80, 1199, 1360, 1557 etc.) and a postulated Manichaean monastery. Teigen, *The Manichaean Church in Kellis*, 154–7, 276–282.

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Pausanias was not only an influential patron[97]; he may have shared a more profound Manichaean affiliation. The author of an undated Greek personal letter from House 3 (P.Kellis I Gr. 63) addresses Pausanias and another recipient named Pisistratos in laudatory style as "my lords sons who are most longed-for and most beloved by us." The marked Manichaean vocabulary underlines his gratitude for their piety and gifts as he writes that he has "benefitted also from the fruits of the soul of the pious," and therefore "shall set going every praise towards your [Pausanias's and Pisistratos's] most luminous soul." Specifically highlighting Manichaeism, he adds that "only our lord the Paraclete is competent to praise you as you deserve and to compensate you at the appropriate moment."[98] In chapter 4, I will argue that P.Kellis I Gr. 63 is not a letter of recommendation, as the editor suggests, but rather a fundraising letter for the elect, as the combination of elaborate praise and requests resembles P.Kellis V Copt. 31 and 32.[99] In this context, the use of Manichaean language suggests that Pausanias and Pisistratos were supporters – maybe even catechumens – of the Manichaeans; they must have appreciated the prospect of the Paraclete's compensation for their piety.

The implications of identifying Pausanias son of Valerius as a patron of Manichaeans in Kellis are twofold. First, it confirms Gardner's early hypothesis about the arrival of Manichaeism in Kellis in the early decades of the fourth century.[100] Second, it consolidates the impression of a well-connected network of Manichaean families.

Close relations between Manichaeans and Roman provincial or imperial officials were not without precedent. Roman legislation during the fourth and fifth centuries suggests that imperial officials protected their Manichaean

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97 Similar religious patronage relationships are attested in Kellis, for example in an inscription for Isis-Demeter by a former magistrate (who is described as "prostates," a patron or leader of an association), and a graffito mentioning a letter to (or from) the "leadership" (prostasia) of an association. K.A. Worp and C.A. Hope, "Dedication Inscriptions from the Main Temple," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994–1995 to 1998–1999 Field Seasons*, ed. C.A. Hope and G.E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002), 325. The graffito in House 4 was found in a context with third-century depictions of Isis and Serapis. Hope et al., "Report on the 2010 Season of Excavations," 42.

98 ..κ̣[α]ὶ̣ ν̣ῦν ἀπο̣λαύομεν πνευ̣μ̣α̣τ̣ικῶν ὀ̣λίγων καρπῶν, ἀ̣πολ̣αύ[ο]με̣ν̣ δ[ὲ] π̣άλιν κα̣ὶ τῶν ψυχικῶν τῆς ε̣ὐ̣σ̣ε̣βο̣ῦ̣ς̣ … φ̣ορα̣ς̣ δηλονότι· καὶ ἀμφοτέρ[ω]ν π̣επλησμ̣[έ]ν̣οι πᾶσαν ε̣ὐλογία̣ν σ̣π̣[ε]υσό̣μεθα πρὸς τὴν φω̣τινοτ̣ά̣τη̣[ν] ὑμῶν ψυχὴν καθ' ὅσον ἡμῖν ἐ[στι] δ̣υ̣να̣[τὸν …]. Μόνος γὰρ ὁ δ[ε]σπότης ἡ̣μ̣ῶ̣ν [ὁ] π̣[α]ρ̣[άκ]λ̣ητος \ἱκανὸς/ ἐπαξ̣ί̣ως ὑμᾶς εὐ̣λο̣γῆσα[ι] κ̣[α]ὶ̣ τ̣[ῷ] δέοντι καιρῷ ἀνταμεί-ψ̣α̣[σ]θ̣αι. P.Kellis I Gr. 63.20–30.

99 The interpretation as a recommendation letter is built on the gratitude expressed by the letter's author for having received "indications of your sympathy and the welcome letter of yours". Worp, *GPK1*, 169.

100 Gardner, *Founder of Manichaeism*, 101–2.

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colleagues.[101] Outside of legal sources, patronage relationships are evidenced by the rhetor Libanius's request (in 364 CE) to his friend Priscianus, the proconsul of Palestina, to protect the Manichaeans so they could be "free from anxiety and that those who wish to harm them will not be allowed to do so."[102] It is unknown whether Priscianus acted in accordance with this request, but the letter shows that it could be dangerous to be Manichaean, even during a period without anti-Manichaean legislation. Local bishops had no need for official legislation to start persecuting Manichaeans. The evidence for Manichaeans suffering from the goading of local Christians is further complemented by reports of public debates and philosophical and theological works written against them.[103] The question of the social reality behind such literary production cannot be pursued here, but further examination of the documentary papyri for indications of religious maltreatment or persecution of Manichaeans is needed.[104]

Three passages in the documentary papyri from Kellis stand out because of their apparent emphasis on religious maltreatment and anxiety. The first passage is found in a letter written by Makarios to his wife Maria (P.Kellis V Copt. 22), in which he accuses Kyria (or is he addressing Maria?) of having no pity for her brother's son "because he is under persecution" (ⲉϥϩⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲇⲓⲱⲅⲙⲟⲥ P.Kellis V Copt. 22.73). Earlier, he announced that he prayed to God to "grant us

101 Prohibition to serve in the imperial service in 445 CE (Novel of Valentinian) and under Justinian specific penalties for officers who failed to denounce their Manichaean colleagues (527 CE, CJ I.5.16). I am grateful to Rea Matsangou for bringing these laws to my attention.

102 Libanius, *Epistle 1253*, translation and citation in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 125.

103 For example, the debate between Aetius and Aphthonius in Alexandria, or the work of George of Laodicea and the refutations of Agapius work described by Photius. Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire*, 137–41. The comparative evidence from the late third-/early fourth-century persecution of Christians in Egypt also suggests that persecutions were local. The intensity varied and periods of violence or repression did not start at the same time in all regions. E. Wipszycka, *The Alexandrian Church: People and Institutions* (Warsaw: University of Warsaw: Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplements, 2015), 83.

104 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 81; Dubois, "Vivre dans la communauté manichéenne," 9. On the relation between legislation and a Manichaean discourse of suffering, see M. Brand, "In the Footsteps of the Apostles of Light: Persecution and the Manichaean Discourse of Suffering," in *Heirs of Roman Persecution: Studies on a Christian and Para-Christian Discourse in Late Antiquity* ed. E. Fournier and W. Mayer (London: Routledge, 2019), 112–134. An important step is made with the reconsideration of the date of P.Ryl. III 469 to the fourth century. See R. Mazza, "Rethinking Persecutions: P.Ryl. III 469 and the Manichaeans in Egypt," in *Egypt and Empire: Religious Identities from Roman to Modern Times* ed. E. O'Connell (London: The British Museum, forthcoming).

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freedom and we may greet you again in the body."[105] Both passages are suggestive. They allude to difficulties that keep them apart, but are these best understood as religious persecution? This entire episode, including fear pertaining to the sacred book as discussed above, could have been about a failed business transaction (including books?), for which Makarios blames Kyria. Her brother's son may have suffered the financial or legal consequences of this misbehavior; the Coptic term for persecution (ⲇⲓⲱⲅⲙⲟⲥ) was also used in military and legal settings.[106] Without further context, it remains unclear whether religious persecution was meant.

The second passage is found in the concluding warning of P.Kellis V Copt. 31: "[D]o not let it stay with you, it may fall into somebody's hands."[107] Seemingly, this refers to the letter itself, which must be passed on to the author's son. While the editors stress the implied need for secrecy, this passage could have stressed the act of passing on. The final warning could have been a reminder to send the letter to his son "with certainty" (ϩⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲱⲣϫ) instead of forgetting about it and leaving the letter behind. That the translation and interpretation of such passages is extremely difficult is seen in a thematically related letter in which Apa Lysimachos addresses recipients with a phrase that has been translated as "do not save this." A new and more probable reading, however, is that Apa Lysimachos says "we might not stay here" (ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲛⲁϩⲙⲁⲥ ⲧⲉϊ P.Kellis VII Copt. 82.39–40); instead of reflecting the way letters were to be treated, the passage refers to travel plans.[108]

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105 ϯϣⲗⲏⲗ ⲁⲡ̣ⲛ̣ⲟⲩⲧⲉ ϫⲉϥⲁϯ ⲛⲉⲛ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲡⲁⲣϩⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲛ̄ⲧⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲱϣⲧ`ⲧⲏⲛⲉ ⲛ̄ⲕⲉⲥⲁⲡ ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲥⲱⲙⲁ. P.Kellis V Copt. 22.10–11. The phrase "parresia" returns several times in Makarios's letters (P.Kellis V Copt. 20.7, 22.10 and 25.25). In Manichaean literature, the phrase is used to express Mani cannot freely speak in the world (1 Keph. 184.7 and 185.2). The editors of the Kellis papyri wonder "if it is more than just the tyranny of distance that keeps the family away from the oasis." Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 82 with further references. Is there any reason to read these passages as indicators of persecution? As Makarios frequently employs Manichaean repertoire, and these phrases do not return in other letters, I take these as rhetorical statements which do not directly reflect the maltreatment of Manichaeans in fourth-century Egypt.

106 Although ⲇⲓⲱⲅⲙⲟⲥ is used frequently by Christian authors to designate the persecution under Decius, the word could be used in military context for hunting or the pursuit by soldiers (of Bedouin criminals?). See O.Claud. 2.357 and 4.327. The verb is used in a legal sense, P.Alex.Giss. 39 (second century CE), BGU 8.1822 (first century BCE) and in the legal designators for the prosecuted party, for example in P. Mich. 13.659 and P.Lond. 5.1708 (both sixth century CE).

107 ⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲣⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲕⲁⲥ ϩⲁⲧⲛ̄ⲧⲏⲛⲉ· ⲥϩⲉϊⲉ ⲁⲧⲟⲧϥ̄ ⲁⲣⲱⲙⲉ P.Kellis V Copt. 31.54.

108 The original interpretation is found in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 81n110. The new translation and interpretation is discussed in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*,

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The third passage referring to persecution is found in P.Kellis V Copt. 37, where Ammon says, "Great grief overcame me … when I heard about what happened: namely that they shook (?) those of this word."[109] The verb translated as "to shake" (ⲕⲓⲙ+ⲉ) also has a softer meaning, namely to move, touch, or beckon. Combined with the grief expressed by Ammon though, it may have carried stronger negative connotations. It is also used in the *Homilies* for something that should not happen, namely that "the church shall not be shaken."[110] Ammon's letter refers to the Manichaean church as "those of this word," a designator that must have carried additional religious connotations, since it is followed by what seems to be an allusion to scripture: "for it is possible for God to thwart their designs."[111] It is the only passage in which difficulties are connected, more or less directly, to everyday religious concerns. Manichaeans of the oasis encountered profound social problems in the Nile valley, or sometimes even hostility for religious reasons.

A larger number of papyrus letters refer to difficult situations, violence, or economic misfortune. They stress that "this place is very difficult" (ⲡⲙⲁ ⲙⲁϫϩ [ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ] P.Kellis V Copt. 31.47–48, P.Kellis VII Copt. 83.7, 110.25) or pray to be kept "safe from all the temptations of Satan and the adversities of the evil place (?)."[112] None of these phrases are straightforward, and most can be read in terms of economic difficulty (compare P.Kellis VII Copt. 89.30) or pious formulas against all sorts of evil. Pamour writes: "you wrote to me: 'When the place is quiet, then write to me'"[113] and Theognostos elaborately states, "the place is disturbed now (and) we are afraid. Let nothing evil happen whilst the place

134n39–40, they suggest the verb is ϩⲙⲉⲥⲧ, "to sit down." Is a similar authority standing behind Ammon's remark that he is not allowed to come to the oasis (P.Kellis V Copt. 37.24–25)?

109 ⲟⲩⲛⲁϭ ⲅⲁⲣ ⲧ̣ⲉ ⲧ[ⲗⲩ]ⲡⲏ ⲉⲧⲁϩ ϣⲱⲡⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ⲙⲛ̄[[ⲧ̣ⲏ̣ⲓ̣]] ⲡⲡⲱϣ ⲛ̄ϩⲏⲧ ⲉⲧⲁϩⲧⲉ ϩⲁⲓ̈ ⲛⲧⲁⲣⲓⲥⲱⲧⲙ̄ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲡⲉⲧⲁϩϣⲱⲡⲉ ϫⲉ ⲁⲩⲕⲓⲙ ⲁⲛⲁ ⲡⲓⲥⲉϫⲉ P.Kellis V Copt. 37.13–20.

110 ⲧⲉⲕ[ⲕⲗⲏ]ⲥⲓⲁ ⲛⲁⲕⲓⲙ ⲉⲛ ⲉⲥⲙⲏⲛ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ Hom. 28.1–2, translated by Pedersen as "The church will not cease remaining," even during the time of the Antichrist. The same phrase returns in Hom. 33.29, 44.10, 82.17 (which is significant: "his heart was firm, he did not waver before him at all"), 85.25 (about the church, "it will not waver until the day …"). The virtue of not wavering, even though life is difficult, was central to the Manichaean ascetic practice and features in other ascetic discourses as well. See chapter 3 on the Manichaean expression "rest" and Crum, *CD*., 108b on the verb "to shake."

111 ⲟⲩⲛ ϭⲁⲙ ⲅⲁⲣ ⲙ̄ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲁⲧⲣⲉϥⲟⲩⲱⲥϥ ⲛ̄ⲛⲟⲩⲙⲉⲩⲉ P.Kellis V Copt. 37.20–22. The editors suggest that, "quite probably this is a quotation or at least allusion to some scripture; but we can not identify it." Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 233.

112 ⲁⲣ̣ⲉ̣ⲧⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲁϫ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲛ̄ⲡⲓⲣⲉⲥⲙⲟⲥ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ̣ ⲛ̄ⲡⲥⲁⲣⲧⲁⲛⲁⲥ̣ ⲙ̣ⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ϭⲗⲙⲃⲁⲗ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ ⲡⲙ̣ⲁ̣ⲛ̣ⲃⲱⲛⲉ P.Kellis VII Copt. 71.8–9. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 74–5.

113 ⲁⲕⲥϩⲉⲓ̈ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ϫⲉ ⲁϣⲱⲡⲉ ⲡⲙⲁ ⲙⲁⲧⲛ̄ ⲉⲓ̈ⲉ ⲥϩⲉⲓ̈ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ P.Kellis VII Copt. 72.26–27.

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remains disturbed."[114] Despite the religious phrases, these passages are hardly solid evidence for religious persecution. Rather, they stem from a wider social perception of disturbing conditions and challenging circumstances.[115]

Ultimately, then, did the Manichaeans in Kellis live under the threat of persecution?[116] Probably not. The Kellis documents show few traces of religious violence. A number of passages refer to feelings of unease, fear, or otherwise unexplained difficulties. Of the three more informative passages, only one makes a connection to religious concerns. While it is possible that some Manichaeans experienced maltreatment on the basis of their religious affiliation, there is no evidence for full religious persecution. Instead, just like modern religious minorities in Egypt, they may have suffered from petty acts of discrimination or a subordinated position in relation to other people. Such maltreatment may have converged with the negative stereotype of the oasis as a foreign and dangerous place.[117] Merchants from the oasis may have suffered because of these stereotypes while traveling in the Nile valley. Their connections to the Roman administrative and military elite from the region, however, make it highly improbable that Manichaeans had to conceal their religious affiliation in their daily affairs in the oasis.

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114 ⲡⲙⲁ ⲧⲏϩ ϯⲛⲟⲩ ⲧⲛ̄ⲣ̄ϩⲁⲧⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲣⲉ ⲟⲩⲡⲉⲑⲁⲩ ϣⲱⲡⲉ ϣⲁⲧⲉ ⲡⲙⲁ ϭⲱ ⲉϥⲧⲏϩ P.Kellis VII Copt. 83.7–8.

115 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 82. See also P.Kellis VII Copt. 83, 89 and 97 for similar troubles, disturbances and difficulties. In the letters collected by Bagnall and Cribiore, the evil eye is mentioned frequently in similar formulas: P.Brem. 64, P.Mich. VIII 473, BGU III 714, P.Würzb. 21, P.Oxy. VI 930 and XIV 1758, from the second century. From the fourth and fifth (?) century, P.Wisc. II 74, P.Köln II 111. A similar sentiment is expressed in liturgical formulas from the fourth century, which were incorporated in an amulet (P.Ryl. III 471). Bruyn, "P. Ryl. III.471," 105–7.

116 Römer, "Manichaeism and Gnosticism in the Papyri," 642 also thinks that it does "not necessarily refer to the difficult circumstances of the person as a Manichaean but rather to the position of a Manichaean believer in a difficult family situation." It should be noted that persecution was also a literary trope for Manichaeans, who remembered the suffering of Mani and the earliest Manichaean community in the Sasanian empire. See Mani's *Epistles* (P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 51.04) and the Syriac fragments from Oxyrhynchus. MS. Syr.D.14 P (recto) fragment 2, in Pedersen and Larsen, *Manichaean Texts in Syriac*, 107. A major argument against persecution by the Roman government is the spatial division of the Kellis houses. The relative lack of private space made it impossible to conceal one's religious practice, as suggested for the Christians under Decius's persecutions, "in an eighth of a rented room or a twentieth of a house in an Egyptian township, it was simply not possible or necessary to conceal one's prayers or worship of God from everyone's eyes." R. Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (London: Peguin Books, 1986), 316.

117 On the negative stereotypes of the oasis as a "physical, conceptual, and human buffer zone between the 'civilized' Nile valley and the 'chaotic' desert," see Boozer, "Frontiers and Borderlands," 275.

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Conclusions

Kellis was an oasis village, but its inhabitants lived in a multicultural Roman-Egyptian society that was connected to the Roman Empire at large. The elite of the oasis presented themselves as well-educated and sophisticated magistrates, chose archaizing Greek names for their children, and spent money on Classical literature and education. Egyptian priests, in the meantime, continued to perform rituals, even though the temple cult fell into disuse and the individual shrines became stables and educational spaces. This religious and cultural multiplicity should be understood against the background of the social and geographical circumstances of the oasis, characterized by remoteness and wealth, openness and archaism.

Pamour's and Makarios's religious practice took place within the context of multiple religious repertoires. Some of these repertoires were attached to institutions with considerable social power, while others lacked leadership and emerging group structures. Names and documents associated with the temple hierarchy reveal the institutional presence of Egyptian priests in the first decades of the fourth century, after which they appear mostly in a scribal function. Aurelius Stonios's scribal activity in a text found in House 2 suggests that these priests continued to play a role in everyday life, even in close proximity to Manichaean families and Christian priests. Some of the temple specialists may have continued to produce amulets or astrological texts, as indicated by occasional references to traditional Egyptian deities in the papyri, but Christian and Manichaean repertoires were also integrated in amuletic texts. This peaceful coexistence, if not flexible intermingling, was already observed in the previous chapter, where Marsis and Psais II's use of a Christian scribe for their legal contract is discussed. The distribution of Classical, Christian, and Manichaean texts over various houses also suggests a more flexible situation than groupism models of late antique religious conflict and competition tend to allow for. Horoscopes and amulets associated with Pamour and his family attest to local religious practices beyond what is typically labeled Manichaeism.

Pamour's family and acquaintances also connected themselves to wider society through a series of interactions with members of the local and regional Roman elite. They were embedded in patronage structures that transcended the local level. Some of them even petitioned the provincial governor without hesitation. Nothing suggests that these people were seeking shelter in a region "less overseen by imperial administrators and also less Christianised," as was previously suggested.[118] The relative ease in their relations with

118 Lieu, *Manichaeism in Mesopotamia*, 97.

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non-Manichaeans and Roman officials may be explained by their shared identification as villagers from Kellis. As elucidated, the inhabitants of the oases sometimes explicitly considered themselves in opposition to those of the Nile valley. Such feelings of otherness caused them to stick together outside the oasis. Instead of existing as *crosscutting* identities, village and religious identifications appear to have existed in separation, without bearing a direct relation to one another. Another explanation of the absence of conflict and concealment may be found in the chronology of Roman legislation, since most of the documents in Kellis were written before Valens's and Valentinian's anti-Manichaean laws. The impact of legislation is, however, invisible. A direct connection between anti-Manichaean legislation and some of the letters' expressions of anxiety and unease is unlikely. Although some situations may have involved the maltreatment of Manichaeans in the Nile valley, they do not warrant the label "religious persecution." Incidents of maltreatment, moreover, did not characterize daily interactions at the village level, nor did they characterize the attitude of the Roman administration or relations with Christians in the oasis. Rather than being characterized by marked and tense relationships, the interaction between Manichaeans and Christian officials seems unmarked, only to be detected by historians through detailed prosopographical analysis. A bleak and religious interpretation of expressions of anxiety and unease is, therefore, not probable. The various inhabitants of the village lived side-by-side without religious tensions. Local co-existence was, in Giovanni Ruffini's words, "organized solely by the push and pull of the day to day."[119]

119 G.R. Ruffini, *Life in an Egyptian Village in Late Antiquity: Aphrodito Before and After the Islamic Conquest* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 27 and 110.

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CHAPTER 3

Orion's Language: Manichaean Self-Designation in the Kellis Papyri

> Greet warmly from me those who give you rest, the elect and the catechumens, each one by name
>
> ORION TO HOR[1]

Language matters. It gives structure to reality and offers building blocks for fundamental acts of self-identification. Sometimes, this self-identification is made explicit in names, labels, and self-designators, but often it is implied in the author's choice of words. Take for example Orion, one of the contemporaries of Makarios from House 3. He writes to his "beloved brother" Hor to praise him as "the good limb of the Light Mind," while greeting two collectives, "those who give you rest" and the "elect and catechumens."[2] Through the usage of this Manichaean linguistic repertoire, the letter received an additional layer of Manichaeanness. The reference to the Light Mind, especially, established a religiously marked situation beyond what most of Orion's contemporaries would have expected.

Explicit Manichaean identifications such as "the good limb of the Light Mind" have been taken to reflect the inherent "sectarianism" of the local Manichaean community.[3] The occurrence of Manichaean self-designators and strong fictive kinship language has led Peter Brown to suggest a "sense of intimate friendship" between catechumens in Kellis, something that may have attracted people like Augustine to Manichaeism. In his opinion, the documentary letters from Kellis show how

> members of the local Manichaean community thought of themselves as bound together by strong ties of spiritual friendship. Their members

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1 ϣⲓ[ⲛ]ⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ⲧ̣ⲟ̣ⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲛⲉⲧϯ ⲙ̄ⲧⲁⲛ ⲛⲉⲕ ⲛ̄ⲛ̣ⲉ̣ⲕⲗⲉⲕ[ⲧ]ⲟⲥ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ⲕⲁⲑ̣ⲏⲕⲟⲩⲙ̣ⲉ̣ⲛⲟⲥ ⲡⲟⲩⲉ ⲡⲟⲩⲉ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲡⲉϥⲣⲉⲛ P.Kellis v Copt. 15.27–30. His name was spelled as Horion in *CDT1*, but I will use Orion throughout the text. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 20.

2 Cited above, P.Kellis v Copt. 15.27–30 and in line 3–4 ⲡⲙⲉⲗ[ⲟ]ⲥ ⲉⲧⲁⲛⲓⲧ ⲙ̄ⲡⲛⲟ̣ⲩ̣ⲥ ⲛ̄[ⲟⲩ]ⲁ̣ⲓ̈ⲛⲉ.

3 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 74.

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> spoke of each other as sons and daughters of the "Light Mind." They were inextricably joined one to the other through the common possession of the "Light Mind."

As a result, he concludes that catechumens and elect experienced a "spiritual solidarity of unusual force."[4] Is he correct? Did Orion's language indeed reflect strong groupness and a sectarian stance?

Religious self-designators, especially when formalized in writing, convey an impression of how ancient individuals and families perceived themselves in relation to others, and how they related their face-to-face acquaintances to the intangible social and religious world around them.[5] Religious self-designators offer insights into what Charles Taylor called "social imaginaries," the conceptual group maps through which "ordinary people imagine their social surroundings."[6] Naming oneself and others is also a social act of framing: placing a situation, relationship, or letter in the context of a larger narrative that comes with associated behavioral expectations. The historical examination of such naming practices is therefore not only important in identifying individuals like Orion and Hor as Manichaeans, but it also sheds light on situational dynamics involved in defining Manichaeanness.[7] It shows *where*, *when*, and *how* conceptual images and stories from theological, cosmological, and heresiological literature became embedded in the social imaginaries of everyday life.[8] Since the group-specific religions of late antiquity are known for narratives with articulate self-understanding and group-specific speech norms, it is worthwhile to examine the documentary papyri for such features. How did the

4 Both passages are from Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, 159.

5 Eliasoph and Lichterman, "Culture in Interaction," 778.

6 C. Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 171.

7 Some previous studies looking into the self-identification of Manichaeans include: A. Böhlig, "Zum Selbstverständnis des Manichäismus," in *A Green Leaf: Papers in Honour of Professor Jes P. Asmussen*, ed. W. Sundermann, J. Duchesne-Guillemin, and F. Vahman (Leiden: Brill, 1988), 317–38; Lieu, "Self-Identity of the Manichaeans," 205–27; N.A. Pedersen, "Manichaean Self-Designations in the Western Tradition," in *Augustine and Manichaean Christianity*, ed. J. van Oort (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 177–96; A. Khosroyev, "Manichäismus: Eine Art persisches Christentum? Der Definitionsversuch eines Phänomens," in *Inkulturation des Christentums im Sasanidenreich*, ed. J. Tubach and M. Arafa (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2007), 43–53.

8 Sociologists and psychologists stressed how "people actively produce identity through their talk." J.S. Howard, "Social Psychology of Identities," *Annual Review of Sociology* 26: 372. On Christian ethnography and the role of heresiology, see T.S. Berzon, *Classifying Christians: Ethnography, Heresiology, and the Limits of Knowledge in Late Antiquity* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2016).

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people describe themselves? How did they address others, and what role was reserved for religious identification? Apart from Orion's explicit Manichaean phrases, Matthaios's extensive greetings to "households" and his politeness strategies containing biblical allusions also serve as examples of identification in action. A fuller examination of these phrases and strategies provides a critical reflection on the postulation that the local Manichaean community was sectarian in nature, suggesting that Brown's "spiritual solidarity of unusual force" is only one of the frameworks involved. An associated question pertains to the extensive – and early – use of Coptic in the Kellis papyri as a community marker. To what extent was the use of Coptic part of in-group language that set Manichaeans apart from their neighbors? By revisiting older theories of linguistic change in late antique Egypt, I will argue that the choice for Coptic over Greek was an outstanding, marked, option that *partially* correlated with Manichaean groupness.

Performing Personal Letters

Ancient letters are not simply treasure troves to be mined for language representing the author's religious stance; rather, letters belonged to a *performance arena* in which various actors played a role.[9] Since the general level of literacy in fourth-century villages was not high, most letters were read out loud by someone other than the primary addressees.[10] Reading and writing personal letters was not a private affair. In addition to a scribe or literate acquaintance who helped with composing the letter, other members of the household were present when news from the Nile valley finally reached the oasis. The letter writers, therefore, made considerable effort to greet all family members, acquaintances, and neighbors. Their letters convey specific information to an audience, but primarily established and nurtured social ties. Shorter letters could also be more abrupt, skipping the formulaic greetings, and sometimes only contained brief informal requests.[11] In such instances, additional information and greetings were transmitted through associated letters or through the letter carrier, who could also inform the audience about events that took

9 J.M. Foley, *How to Read an Oral Poem* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 116.

10 But also see Wipszycka's argument for a relatively high degree of literacy. E. Wipszycka, "Le degré d'alphabétisation en Égypte byzantine," *Revue des etudes augustiniennes* 30 (1984): 279–96.

11 Bagnall and Cribiore, *Women's Letters*, 15–19.

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place after the letter was sealed.[12] This made reading a dynamic performance with added information, questions from the audience, and oral responses. As Lincoln Blumell remarks, "the whole epistolary process in Late Antiquity was often a group project."[13]

Analyzing letters in the context of a public *performance* highlights the difference between ancient communal reading experiences and modern, private letters or emails. A postcard with greetings from family members on holiday may be a more suitable comparison. A postcard is generally not meant to convey information; it reinforces family bonds, contains formulaic phrases and greetings, and may suggest informal status or hierarchy (for example, between those who can afford the expensive holiday and those who stay at home). As with a postcard, ancient audiences would know epistolary conventions, sequences, cues, and codes. Within the performance arena, preexisting cultural and social expectations were met with greater or lesser success.[14] As part of an implicit information game, ancient letter writers employed extensive formulas and phrases belonging to politeness strategies to establish or highlight a smooth working relationship in which the interaction took place.[15] Structural parallels from Arabic, Greek, and Coptic documentary letters show how authors used politeness strategies to reduce friction and signify their belonging to a

12 There is a dearth of literature on the situatedness of ancient (personal) letters. The few studies that reflect on these reading-experiences include L.H. Blumell, "The Message and the Medium: Some Observations on Epistolary Communication in Late Antiquity," *Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism* 10 (2014): 46–53, 57–65; A. Verhoogt, "Dictating Letters in Greek and Roman Egypt from a Comparative Perspective (Unpublished Working Paper)," (2009). Bagnall and Cribiore, *Women's Letters*, 25–32 turn to medieval letters to remedy the absence of late antique information. On the gifts that sometimes accompanied these letters, see J. Williams, "Letter Writing, Materiality, and Gifts in Late Antiquity: Some Perspectives on Material Culture," *Journal of Late Antiquity* 7, no. 2 (2014): 351–59. On letter-writing in relation to the New Testament, see S.K. Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1986); H.-J. Klauck, *Ancient Letters and the New Testament: A Guide to Context and Exegesis* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2006). New perspectives on the situatedness of religious identifications in late antique papyri will be presented in M. Brand and E. Scheerlinck eds., *Religious Identifications in Late Antique Papyri* (London: Routledge, forthcoming).

13 Blumell, "The Message and the Medium," 65.

14 E.D. Zakrzewska, "The Bohairic Acts of the Martyrs as a Genre of Religious Discourse," in *Christianity and Monasticism in Northern Egypt*, ed. G. Gabra and H.N. Takla (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2017), 228. E.D. Zakrzewska, "Masterplots and Martyrs: Narrative Techniques in Bohairic Hagiography," in *Narratives of Egypt and the Ancient Near East: Literary and Linguistic Approaches*, ed. F. Hagen, et al. (Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 516.

15 E. Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1959), 10 and passim.

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community of practice.[16] Some of these epistolary politeness formulas were learned from practice-letter formularies, but more specific religious repertoires could be drawn upon for situational needs.[17] Greek letters became more formal and elaborate in the fourth century, with allusions to biblical narratives and strongly marked Christian formulas, while Coptic letters utilized both spontaneous simplicity and a more lavish, formal style.[18] Some of the letters found in Kellis are of the latter lavish type, but the majority combine an informal conventional tone with occasional religious phrases and designators.

Self-Designation in Documentary Papyri

Most letters in the Kellis corpus refer to the recipients as family members or closely related members of the household, neighborhood, or village. Identification with a village is a default in Greek legal documents, which frequently designated people with their place of residence. An illuminating example of the various types of designators is found in a contract dating from 363 CE pertaining to an exchange of ownership rights between Aurelius Psenpnoutes son of Pachoumon and Aurelius Horos son of Pamour (P.Kellis I Gr. 30). The latter is represented by his paternal grandfather, who is introduced as:

> Aurelius Psais son of Pamour and mother Tekysis, about *n* years old, with a scar on the flank of the shin of the left leg, from the village of Kellis belonging to the city of the Mothites in the Great Oasis, acting on behalf of his grandson Horos and his son Pamour named "Egyptians" (?), residing in the same village of Aphrodite in the same *nome*. Greetings.[19]

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16 E.M. Grob, *Documentary Arabic Private and Business Letters on Papyrus: Form and Function, Content and Context* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010), 121–23.

17 Collected in M.R.M. Hasitzka, *Neue Texte und Dokumentation zum Koptisch-Unterricht* (Vienna: Hollinek, 1990), no. 109–83. Studied in T.S. Richter, "Coptic Letters," *Asiatische Studien* 62, no. 3 (2008): 739–70; Grob, *Documentary Arabic Private and Business Letters on Papyrus*, 121–23.

18 Bagnall and Cribiore, *Women's Letters*, 17–18.

19 Αὐρηλίου Ψάιτος̣ Π[α]μοῦρ μητρὸς Τεκύσιος ὡ̣[ς ἐτῶν –ca.?– οὐλὴν ἔχοντος ἐπὶ] πλαγίας ἀντικνήμης ἀρ̣ιστεροῦ ποδὸς ἀπὸ κώμης Κέλλεως τῆς Μωθιτῶν πόλεως Ὀάσεως Μ[εγάλης χρηματίζοντος ὑπὲ̣ρ τοῦ] υἱωνοῦ Ὥρου καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ Παμοῦρ Αἰ̣γ̣υ̣πτ̣ί̣ων̣ λ̣εγομένω̣[ν ἐπ]ιδημήσ̣αντος τῇ αὐτῇ κώμῃ Ἀφροδίτης τοῦ [αὐτοῦ νομοῦ ἀλλήλοι]ς χαίρειν. P.Kellis I Gr. 30.5–7. The nickname "Egyptians" is barely legible. Lewis interprets it as meaning "city folk" from the Nile valley instead of the oasis. N. Lewis, "Notationes Legentis," *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 34 (1997): 29–30.

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Names, nicknames, physical descriptions, family relations, and the village- and nome context provided enough designation to clarify which parties were involved in this transaction.[20] Similar designations in other documents listed information such as occupation (Tithoes, the carpenter, P.Kellis I Gr. 11, Aurelius Stonius, priest, P.Kellis I Gr. 13) and social position (Aurelius Pausanias, son of Valerius, former magistrate of the city of the Mothites, P.Kellis I Gr. 38). The following sections will give an overview of seven types of self-designators, which includes allusions to the Manichaean church hierarchy, metaphors of belonging, and ambiguous references to the household or neighborhood (see the list at the end of the chapter with parallels from Manichaean liturgical texts).

Kinship Language and Ethnic Reasoning

Kinship language was commonly used to refer to colleagues, neighbors, and friends throughout the ancient world.[21] The extensive usage of kinship language in the Kellis letters complicates prosopographical research, as it masks the distinction between real kin and fictive family. Its prominence, however, also points to the value of the family metaphor. Belonging expressed in terms of brotherhood or daughterhood stressed commonality, shared expectations, and behavioral norms.

Manichaean kinship language in personal letters was strongly related to the behavioral norms associated with the two classes of Manichaeans. This is most strongly visible in P.Kellis V Copt. 31 and 32, two Coptic personal letters written by members of the elect. In both letters, the author is an anonymous "father" (ⲡⲉϊⲱⲧ) who writes to his "daughter(s)" (ϣⲉⲣⲉ) for financial or material support.[22] The recipients of P.Kellis V Copt. 31 are never named, but only addressed in kinship terminology, while the recipient of P.Kellis V Copt. 32 was addressed as Eirene, a personal name meaning "peace." The address formulas of both letters, printed together in Table 11, show the extensive and explicit designations that were incorporated into the framework of a father-daughter

20 Worp, *GPK1*, 89–90; A. Delattre, "Éléments de l'identification en Égypte (IVᵉ–VIIᵉ siècles)," in *Identifiers and Identification Methods in the Ancient World*, ed. M. Depauw and S. Coussement (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), 153–62.

21 P. Arzt-Grabner, "'Brothers' and 'Sisters' in Documentary Papyri and in Early Christianity," *Revista Biblica* 50 (2002): 185–204.

22 Fourth-century Christian parallels for this use of the paternal title mainly derive from the monastic environment. At the monastery of Bawit, to use an example from a later date, both "mother" and "father" were used for senior members of the community. See also the frequent use of "Apa." S.J. Clackson, *Coptic and Greek Texts Relating to the Hermopolite Monastery of Apa Apollo* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, Ashmolean Museum, 2000), 8, 29.

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TABLE 11 Start of two letters written by elect

Letter	P.Kellis v Copt. 31.1–9[a]	P.Kellis v Copt. 32.1–17[b]
Addressee	"My loved daughters, who are greatly revered by me: the members of the holy Church, the daughters of the Light Mind, they who also are numbered with the children of God; the favoured, blessed, God-loving souls; my *shona* [female?] children.	"To our loved daughter: the daughter of the holy church, the catechumen of the faith; the good tree whose fruit never withers, which is your love that emits radiance every day. She who has acquired for herself her riches and stored them in the treasuries that are in the heights, where moths shall not find a way, nor shall thieves dig through to them to steal; which (storehouses) are the sun and the moon. She whose deeds resemble her name, our daughter, Eirene.
Author	It is I, your father who is in Egypt, who writes to you: in the Lord, greetings!"	It is I, your father who writes to you: in God, greetings!"

a ⲛⲁϣⲉⲣⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙⲉⲣⲉⲧⲉ ⲉⲧ`ⲧⲉⲓ̈ⲁⲧ` ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲧ ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ ⲙ̄ⲙ̣ⲉ̣ⲗ̣ⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲕ`ⲕⲗ̣ⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ [ⲛ̄ϣⲉⲣⲉ] ⲙ̣̄ⲡ̣ⲛⲟⲩⲥ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲁⲓ̈ⲛⲉ ⲛⲉ̣[ⲧⲏⲡ ⲁⲛ ⲙ]ⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ· ⲙ̣ⲯ̣[ⲩ]ⲭⲁ̣ⲩⲉ ⲉⲧⲥⲙⲁⲙⲁⲧ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲟⲥ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲓ̈ⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛⲁϣⲉⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥϩⲟⲛⲁ· ⲁⲛⲁⲕ ⲡⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲓ̈ⲱⲧ` ⲉⲧϩⲛ̄ⲕⲏⲙⲁ· ⲡⲉⲧⲥϩⲉⲓ̈ ⲛⲏⲧⲛ̄ ϩⲙ̄ ⲡϫ̣ⲁⲓ̈ⲥ ⲭⲁⲓⲣⲉⲓⲛ·.

b ⲧⲛ̄ϣⲉⲣⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙⲉⲣⲓⲧ ⲧϣⲉⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ ⲧⲕⲁⲑⲏⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲏ ⲙ̄ⲡⲛⲁϩⲧⲉ ⲡϣⲏⲛ ⲉⲧⲁⲛⲓⲧ ⲉⲧⲉⲙⲁⲡϥ̄ⲕⲁⲣⲡⲟⲥ ϩⲱϭⲙ̄ ⲁⲛⲏϩⲉ ⲉ[ⲧ]ⲉ ⲛ̣ⲧ̣ⲁⲥ ⲧⲉ ⲧⲉⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ ⲉⲧϩⲟⲩ[ⲣⲉ]ϣⲣⲱ̄ ⲙ̄ⲙⲏⲛⲉ ⲧⲉⲧⲁⲥ[ϫ]ⲡ̣ⲟ ⲛⲉⲥ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲥⲭⲣⲏⲙⲁ [ⲁⲥ]ϭⲁⲗⲱⲟⲩ ⲁ̣ⲛⲉϩⲱⲣ ⲉⲧ̣ϩ̣ⲓ̣ [ⲡ]ϫ̣[ⲓ]ⲭⲉ ⲉⲧⲉ ⲙⲁⲣⲉ ϩⲁⲗⲉ ϭⲛ̄ ⲙ̣ⲁⲓ̈ⲧ· ⲟⲩⲇⲉ ⲙⲁⲣⲉ ⲗ̣ⲏ̣ⲥⲧⲏⲥ [ϫ]ⲁϫⲧ` ⲁⲣⲁⲩ ⲁϫⲓⲟⲩⲉ ⲉⲧⲉ ⲛ̄[ⲧⲁ]ⲩ̣ ⲛⲉ ⲡⲣⲏ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲟϩ· ⲧⲉⲧⲉ [ⲛ]ⲉⲥϩⲃⲏⲩⲉ ⲉⲓⲛⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲥⲣⲉⲛ [ⲧ]ⲛ̣̄ϣⲉⲣⲉ ⲉⲓⲣⲏⲛⲏ ⲁⲛⲁⲕ ⲡⲉ̣[ⲓ̈]ⲱⲧ ⲡⲉⲧⲥϩⲉⲓ ⲛⲉ ϩⲙ̄ ⲡⲛⲟⲩ[ⲧⲉ] ⲭ̣ⲁ̣ⲓⲣⲉⲓⲛ.

relationship. In both letters, the "daughter(s)" are characterized using elaborate Manichaean designators that indicate their status as catechumens, a position which is only made explicit in P.Kellis v Copt. 32. By listing all the virtues of the daughters, the elect author framed his request for material support. He reminded the recipients of behavioral expectations pertaining to their role as catechumens and attempted to activate a Manichaean framework through biblical allusions and cosmological metaphors.

Within this rhetorical language, the biblical allusion in P.Kellis v Copt. 32 stands out. The letter alludes to a New Testament parable about investing

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treasures in heaven, where moths and thieves cannot reach it (Matt 6.19–20 – the parallels with Matt 24:42–44 and 1 Thess 5.2 will be addressed in chapter 4).[23] This parable featured frequently in Manichaean scripture, where it connected the almsgiving of pious catechumens with the released Light particles of the Living Soul stored on the sun and the moon (for example in 2 PsB. 151.4–152.9).[24] It is appropriated in this letter as a directive for Eirene to commit herself to her almsgiving. The explicit reference to the sun and moon as storehouses of spiritual riches ingeniously crafts a connection between kinship language, the Manichaean ideology of giving, and the peace (Eirene) brought about by these gifts.

Since we are otherwise mostly uninformed about the recipients of these two letters, we do not know to what extent they would have recognized themselves in these pious descriptions. Eirene, for whom we have one other reference in the Kellis letters, was probably an active businesswoman like Tehat. In this letter, her identity is framed strictly by the role of daughter and catechumen, a supporter and patron of the elect. This is an inversion of the standard Roman pattern of patronage, in which the wealthy few would of the patrons, rather than the recipients of financial support.[25] In most ancient letters, clients or petitioners addressed their patron using politeness strategies and extensive designators. In this case, the elect skillfully included the language of daughterhood to subvert the social inequality of patronage structures, as the letters continued with requests for oil and wheat. The request suggests that Eirene, in fact, is acting as a patron for the itinerant elect: the daughter might be spiritually dependent on the father(s), but the fathers definitely depended on the material support of the daughter(s).

The metaphor of the religious community as a family was not used exclusively by anonymous fathers. Other letter writers, including Makarios, address their recipients as a "child of righteousness" (πϣηρε ⲛ̄ⲧⲇⲓⲕⲁⲓⲟⲥⲩⲛⲏ P.Kellis v

23 M. Franzmann, "An 'Heretical' Use of the New Testament: A Manichaean Adaptation of Matt 6:19–20 in P.Kell. Copt 32," in *The New Testament Interpreted*, ed. B.C. Lategan and C. Breytenbach (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 153–62.

24 M. Franzmann, "The Treasure of the Manichaean Spiritual Life," in *'In Search of Truth': Augustine, Manichaeism and Other Gnosticism; Studies for Johannes van Oort at Sixty*, ed. J.A. van den Berg, et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 235–43. To which we can now add the parallel citation of Jesus in 1 Keph. 149, 362.27. The same theme is used in Iranian texts from the Zoroastrian tradition. A. Hintze, "Treasure in Heaven: A Theme in Comparative Religion," in *Irano-Judaica VI: Studies Relating to Jewish Contacts with Persian Culture Throughout the Ages*, ed. S. Shaked and A. Netzer (Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi Institute, 2008), 9–36.

25 Baker-Brian, "Mass and Elite," 166. P.Kellis VII Copt. 105 mentions Eirene and therefore settles her name as a proper name. It does not, however, reveal more about her identity beyond the fact that she was greeted by Psais (could this have been Psais III?).

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Copt. 14.6) or "children of the living race" (ⲛ̄ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧ̣ⲣⲉⲉ̈ⲧⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲛϩ̄ P.Kellis V Copt. 22.5). Just as in the letters of the elect, this kinship language had a performative function. It contributed to a religious framework that had associated group norms and expectations about behavior. Scholarship on Early Christian usage of family metaphors suggests that these designators tapped into longstanding norms of Greco-Roman family ethics: kin took care of the material needs of relatives.[26] Expanding real family ethics into fictive kinship relationships, Christian authors approached Christianness in terms of kinship fidelity, which was defined by sharing.[27] Manichaean theological texts followed this trend by connecting virtuous brotherhood to behavioral norms.[28] A Manichaean epistle from Kellis (resembling Mani's *Epistles*) explains that "the brothers (love) the brothers, also the sisters (love) the sisters and you will all become children of a single undivided body" and adds "now this is the way that you should behave, my loved ones, so that you will all possess this one love…," and "man cannot remain without the seal of the love of his brotherhood and that of his redeemer."[29] Like in the biblical gospels and Pauline letters, brotherhood, love, and proper behavior were deeply connected.[30]

Kinship language in personal letters not only evoked certain behavioral norms for catechumens and their responsibility as (fictive) family members,

26 The connection between behavioral expectations and virtues attached to sibling-language is discussed in J.H. Hellerman, *The Ancient Church as Family* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001); D.G. Horrell, "From ἀδελφοί to οἶκος θεοῦ: Social Transformation in Pauline Christianity," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 120, no. 2 (2001): 302.

27 Tertullian, *Apol.* 39.8–11. Citated and discussed in Hellerman, *The Ancient Church as Family*, 181–2.

28 One of the personal letters stressed that there is no treachery in "your brotherhood." ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲥⲁⲛ ⲉ[ⲧ]ⲉ̣ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲕⲣⲁϥ ⲛ̣ϩⲏⲧⲥ P.Kellis VII Copt. 72.5. ϯϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲧⲕ̄ⲙⲛⲧⲥⲁⲛ ⲉⲧⲉⲛⲓⲧ … P.Kellis VII Copt. 86.4. ϯϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲧⲕⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲥⲁⲛ ⲉⲧⲛⲁⲛⲟⲩⲥ P.Kellis VII Copt. 115.9–10. See also P.Kellis I Gr. 75. On the threat of treachery of siblings, and the strong link between behavior expectations and kinship language, see Hellerman, *The Ancient Church as Family*, 39; Horrell, "From ἀδελφοί to οἶκος θεοῦ," 302.

29 ⲛ̄ⲥⲁⲛ· ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲥⲁⲛ· ⲛ̄ⲥⲱⲛⲉ ⲁ[ⲛ ⲛ̄]ⲛ̄ⲥⲱ[ⲛⲉ·] [ⲛ̄]ⲧⲉⲧⲛⲛ̄ϣⲱⲡⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲧⲛ̄· ⲛ̄ϩⲓⲛ[ϣⲏ]ⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛ̣[ⲟⲩⲥ] ϣ̣ⲙⲁ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲱⲧ ⲛ̄ⲁⲧⲡⲱⲣϫ· ϯ[ⲛⲟ]ⲩ ⲧϩⲉ [ⲧⲉⲧⲉ]ⲓ̈ ⲉⲧⲉⲧⲛⲁⲉⲥ ⲛⲁⲙ̄ⲣⲣⲉⲧⲉ· ϫⲉⲣⲉⲧⲛ̣ⲁⲣ̄ⲫ[ⲟⲣⲉ ⲧ]ⲏⲣⲧⲛ̄· ⲛ̄ϯⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲱⲧ·…. ⲡ[ⲣ]ⲱ̣ⲙⲉ ϭⲉ [ⲙⲁϥ ⲙⲟⲩⲛ ⲁⲃ]ⲁ̣ⲗ̣ ⲭⲱⲣⲓⲥ ⲧⲥⲫⲣⲁⲅⲓⲥ ⲛ̄[ⲧⲉ] ⲧ̣ⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ̣ [ⲛ̄ⲧⲉϥⲙ]ⲛ̄ⲧⲥⲁⲛ· ⲙⲛ̄ ⲧⲁⲡⲉϥⲣⲉϥⲥ̣[ⲱⲧ]ⲉ· P.Kellis VI Copt. 54 lines 52–54 and 54–55, 59–61.

30 In the New Testament this is seen in the Gospel of John (John 13.34–35, the commandment to love one another) and the letters of Paul (Rom 12:10, brotherly love and correct behavior). Among the most used self-designators in Kellis documentary texts are constructions based on "loved one(s)," like the "loved one of my soul" (P.Kellis V Copt. 15.1). Such a designation may have been related to the more general usage of the adjective "beloved" before a family designator but as stand-alone shorthand it is attested frequently in Mani's *Epistles*.

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but also connected the postulated cosmological world with social relations on earth. In P.Kellis V Copt. 31 and 32, Eirene is a daughter of the holy church, and the other addressees are called "daughters of the Light Mind" and "Children of God" (P.Kellis V Copt. 31.4–5). This last phrase can be compared with the phrase "child of righteousness" in P.Kellis V Copt. 14.5, 15.2 and 19.1, which derives from the *Kephalaia*. In this theological context, the child of righteousness is the "new man" who is free from the enslavement of the body.[31] Even though the "child of righteousness" is only born after the liberation of the body in Manichaean theology, the documentary texts show that it was used for catechumens in Kellis. These labels established a narrative link between the transempirical world and the believers, strengthened by allusions to biblical text and Manichaean theology. For some of the elect, these self-designators served as *abbreviations* of a more complex social imaginary, showing that they understood individual action as part of a cosmological drama in which they represented the "living race" and embodied virtues such as righteousness and truth.[32] Whether all catechumens would have understood this cosmological schema remains a question, especially as most kinship terminology was used without further religious elaboration. As a result, all kinship language carried a certain ambivalence: it could be read with strong Manichaean connotations, but it could also be read as unmarked expressions of politeness in household and village interactions.[33]

31 "He shall set right the members of the soul, form and purify them, and construct a new man of them, a child of righteousness." ϣⲁϥⲥⲙⲛ̄ ⲙ̄ⲙⲉⲗⲟⲥ ⲛⲧⲯⲩⲭⲏ ⲛ̄ϥⲕⲁⲧⲟ̣[ⲩ] ⲛ̄ϥⲥⲁⲧⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ϥⲥⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲣⲙ̄ⲛ̄ⲃⲣ̄ⲣⲉ ⲟⲩϣⲏⲣⲉ [ⲛ̄]ⲧⲉ ⲧⲇⲓⲕⲁⲓⲟⲥⲩⲛⲏ 1 Keph. 38, 96.25–27.

32 P. Trebilco, *Self-Designations and Group Identity in the New Testament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 11–12.

33 An equally difficult question revolves around the meaning and translation of "my *shona* – daughters" (ⲛⲁϣⲉⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥϩⲟⲛⲁ) in P.Kellis V Copt. 31.7. The phrase ⲥϩⲟⲛⲁ occurs four times in the documentary papyri and resembles the Sahidic Coptic ⲥϩⲓⲙⲉ (female, woman). In P.Kellis V Copt. 31, this would result in a "pleonastic construction" ("my female daughters"). Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 171, 212 referring to Crum, *CD*, 343a, 385a; See also Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 24. Other letters use ⲥϩⲟⲛⲉ and ⲥϩⲓⲙⲉ as if two distinct terms (P.Kellis V Copt. 44.14, 32) or employ the variant ⲥϩⲟⲛⲉ (P.Kellis V Copt. 20.50). Although two of these passages seem to suggest a collective (P.Kellis V Copt. 20.50 and P. Kellis VII Copt. 58.19), this interpretation is merely speculation. The exact interpretation of the phrase remains ambiguous and without parallels outside the Kellis papyri. J. Kristionat, *Zwischen Selbstverständlichkeit und Schweigen: Die Rolle der Frau im frühen Manichäismus* (Heidelberg: Verlag Antike, 2013), 91 opts for an alternative form of the Coptic word for "schwester" (ⲥϩⲱⲛⲉ). Alternatively, it may be from the Egyptian *st-ḥnwt* "mistress." Jean Daniel Dubois has suggested it came from the ancient Egyptian for "young girl" (Dubois, personal communication, August 2015).

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A related set of self-designators made use of the repertoire of ethnic reasoning. Ethnic reasoning has been studied as a rhetorical strategy by which Early Christians shaped their religious tradition, both by positioning themselves as a demarcated ethnic group and by reframing themselves as universal and beyond ethnic boundaries.[34] According to Denise Kimber Buell, ethnic reasoning expressed the inclusive and distinct nature of Christianness; it gave Christians conceptual space to legitimize their group identity as natural and universal, while also allowing for a certain fluidity in membership structures.[35] Christian authors, for example, spoke about belonging to the "righteous race," or the "god-loving and god-fearing race."[36] Conceptualizing conversion as rebirth allowed new members to enter into this new race.[37] When Makarios addresses Maria, Kyria, and Pshemnoute as "children of the living race" (ⲛ̄ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧ̣ⲣⲉⲓ̈ⲧⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲛϩ̄ P.Kellis v Copt. 22.5), he made use of the same type of ethnic reasoning to differentiate between insiders and outsiders. He may have learned the notion from Manichaean liturgical and theological texts speaking about a common identity as "children of the living race,"[38] or from one of the elect, Apa Lysimachos, who writes about "our children who are among our race" (ⲛ̄ⲛ̣ⲉⲛϣⲏⲣⲉ̣ ⲉⲧ̣ϩ[ⲛ̄ ⲧⲛ̄]ⲣ̣ⲉⲓ̈ⲧⲉ P.Kellis v Copt. 30.5). An attestation of the same designator in one of Mani's *Epistles* at Kellis contributes to the impression that letter writers imitated Mani's epistolary style and thereby appropriated and adopted the social map of theological texts into everyday life.[39]

Self-designators built on race do not immediately point to a sectarian sociological and soteriological determinism, as is sometimes claimed by ancient heresiologists. In fact, Buell and Williams show the opposite was sometimes true.[40] Ethnic reasoning was used without implying deterministic beliefs about salvation. Instead, metaphors of ethnicity and race were perceived as permeable; they emphasized the openness of the group identity, which allowed

34 D.K. Buell, *Why This New Race* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005); E.S. Gruen, "Christians as a 'Third Race': Is Ethnicity at Issue?," in *Christianity in the Second Century*, ed. J. Carleton Paget and J. Lieu (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 235–49.

35 Buell, *Why This New Race*, 3.

36 Ignatius, *Mart. Pol.* 14.1, 17.1, 3.2, cited in Buell, *Why This New Race*, 52.

37 Buell, *Why This New Race*, 114.

38 [ⲛ̄ϣ]ⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲣⲉⲓ̈ⲧⲉ, 1 PsB. 154.15 and in the reconstruction in T.Kellis II Copt. 4, B41.

39 ⲛ̄ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛϯⲣⲉⲓ̈ⲧⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲛϩ "the sons of this living race" P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 82.7. Gardner, *KLT1*, 39. Pedersen notes that "the crucial point rather seems to be that this is a very rare attestation of an expression which seems to have been dear to Mani himself." Pedersen and Larsen, *Manichaean Texts in Syriac*, 206.

40 See the examples discussed in Buell, *Why This New Race*, 117.

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people to choose their own affiliations.[41] In the *Epistle* of Mani found at Kellis, the author identifies the community as the "children of this living kindred," but he continues to stress their background in the race and kin of the world: "[T]hey who have been chosen from every race and kin. We have been chosen because of nothing except that we could know our soul and understand everything; and strip ourselves of the world."[42] Here, their identity as a new race does not imply an inherent, predetermined Manichaean nature, but was the result of "being chosen" (ⲉⲧ̣ⲁⲩ̣ⲥⲁⲧⲡⲟⲩ) and receiving Mani's teaching, example, and wisdom.[43]

"Catechumens" and "Elect"

Many of the kinship metaphors used by Manichaeans related to the division of Manichaeans into catechumen and elect. The author of P.Kellis v Copt. 31 describes the catechumens as "my loved daughters, who are greatly revered by me: the members of the holy Church, the daughters of the Light Mind, they who also are numbered with the children of God," and Eirene was approached as a "daughter of the holy church" and "catechumen of the faith."[44] The self-designators "catechumen" and "elect" were only infrequently used in the other personal letters, with Orion's letters as the main exception. He finished most of his letters by sending greetings to all those in the oasis, including the catechumens and elect:

> Greet warmly for me they who give you rest, the elect and the catechumens, each one by name.[45]

41 On this flexible notion of soteriological determinism in Valentinian sources, see Buell, *Why This New Race*, 116–37; M.A. Williams, *The Immovable Race* (Leiden: Brill, 1985), 158–85; D. Brakke, "Self-Differentiation among Christan Groups: The Gnostics and Their Opponents," in *The Cambridge History of Christianity: Origins to Constantine*, ed. M.M. Mitchell and F.M. Young (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 251. On the question of determinism, see N. Denzey Lewis, *Cosmology and Fate in Gnosticism and Graeco-Roman Antiquity. Under Pitiless Skies* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

42 … ⲛ̄ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛϯⲣⲉïⲧⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲛϩ̀: ⲛⲉⲧⲉϩⲁⲩⲥⲁⲧⲡⲟⲩ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲅⲉⲛⲟⲥ ⲅⲉⲛⲟⲥ ϩⲓ ⲣⲉïⲧⲉ ⲣⲉ̣ïⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲩⲥⲁⲧ̀ⲡⲛ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲗⲁⲩⲉ ⲉⲛ ⲉⲓⲙⲏⲧⲓ ⲁⲧⲣⲛ̄ⲥⲟⲩⲱⲛ ⲛ̄ⲧⲛ̄ⲯⲩⲭⲏ ⲛ̄ⲧⲛ̄ⲙ̄ⲙⲉ ⲁϩⲱⲃ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲛ̄ⲧⲛ̄ⲕⲁⲛⲉ ⲕⲁϩⲏⲩ ⲙ̄ⲡ̣ⲕ̣ⲟ̣[ⲥⲙ]ⲟ̣ⲥ̣ … P.Kellis vi Copt. 53, 82.7–12.

43 P.Kellis vi Copt. 53, 82.04 and 82.20–21.

44 P.Kellis v Copt. 31.1–5 and P.Kellis v Copt. 32.1–4.

45 ϣⲓ[ⲛ]ⲉ ⲛⲏï ⲧ̣ⲟ̣ⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲛⲉⲧϯ ⲙ̄ⲧⲁⲛ ⲛⲉⲕ ⲛ̄ⲛ̣ⲉ̣ⲕⲗⲉⲕ[ⲧ]ⲟⲥ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ⲕⲁⲑ̣ⲏⲕⲟⲩⲙ̣ⲉ̣ⲛⲟⲥ ⲡⲟⲩⲉ ⲡⲟⲩⲉ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲡⲉϥⲣⲉⲛ P.Kellis v Copt. 15.27–30. Interestingly, ⲉⲕⲗⲉⲕⲧⲟⲥ is used in the two examples cited above (P.Kellis v Copt. 15.28, 16.40), and in P.Kellis v Copt. 28.25 in a fragmentary context. The Coptic ⲥⲟⲧⲡ is not attested as self-designator in the documentary letters. ⲛ̄ⲕⲁⲑⲏⲕⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ are mentioned in three examples cited above (P.Kellis v Copt. 15.28, 16.40 (reconstructed) and 17.52), as well as P.Kellis v Copt. 22.61, and 32.2.

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> Greet for me all … the elect and the catechumens, all they who give rest to you, and every one.[46]

> Greet warmly for me my sister Aristakenia, all (?) the catechumens and they who give rest to you.[47]

These greetings indicate that the Manichaeans in Kellis were indeed familiar with the same binary division used in the theological texts found at Medinet Madi. Outside the Kellis text, "catechumens" are only infrequently mentioned in papyrus letters (the exception including the Greek Manichaean letters from Oxyrhynchus and letters of recommendation).[48]

Apart from receiving direct greetings, catechumens were also praised in ornamental phrases for their supportive role. They are the "fruit of the flourishing tree," the "blossom of love," and "good caretakers" (P.Kellis V Copt. 31 and 32). From the position of "father," the elect could praise their daughters because they were "helpers," "worthy patrons," and "firm unbending pillars" (ⲉⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲟⲓ̈ ⲛⲉⲛ ⲛ̄ⲃⲟⲏⲑⲟⲥ ϩⲓ ⲡⲁⲧⲣⲟⲛ ⲉϥⲣ̄ϣⲉⲩ· ϩⲓ ⲥⲧⲩⲗⲟⲥ ⲉϥⲧⲁϫⲣⲁⲓ̈ⲧ P.Kellis V Copt. 31.16–18). These designators point to unequal social standing, as they also do in the letter to Eirene. By using the Latin loanword *patronus*, often used in Greek, the elect author identifies the wealthy and influential catechumens explicitly as benefactors. The Coptic term is also used once in Coptic Manichaean texts, in a section of the *Kephalaia* which describes the protection of a king as "the patronage of the church."[49] Thus, the elect authors of P.Kellis V Copt. 31 and 32 articulate a Manichaean narrative, but they also integrate biblical terminology and metaphors and incorporate patronage structures from their direct cultural surroundings.

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46 ϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ ⲁ …….. ⲧ̣ⲏ̣ⲣ̣ⲟ̣ⲩ ⲛ̣ⲉ̣ⲕⲗⲉ̣ⲕ̣ⲧ̣ⲟ̣ⲥ̣ [………]…. ⲛⲉⲧϯⲙⲧⲁⲛ ⲛⲉⲕ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ P.Kellis V Copt. 16.40–41.

47 ϣⲓⲛ̣ⲉ̣ ⲛ̣ⲏⲓ̣ ⲧ̣ⲟⲛ̣ⲟ̣ⲩ ⲁ̣ⲧ̣ⲁ̣ⲥ̣ⲱⲛⲉ̣ ⲁⲣⲓ̣ⲥ̣ⲧⲁⲕⲉ̣ⲛⲓⲁ ⲁ̣ⲛ̄ⲕⲁ<ⲑⲏ>ⲕⲟⲩⲙ̣ⲉ̣ⲛ̣ⲟ̣ⲥ̣….. ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛⲉ̣ⲧ̣ϯⲙ̣ⲧ̣ⲁ̣ⲛ ⲛⲉⲕ P.Kellis V Copt. 17.52–53.

48 The recommendation letters by bishop Sotas of Oxyrhynchus are firm evidence for the Christian usage of this title in papyrus letters. A. Luijendijk, *Greetings in the Lord: Early Christians and the Oxyrhynchus Papyri* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press for Harvard Theological Studies, 2008), 81–124.

49 [ⲧ]ⲡⲁⲧⲣⲱⲛⲓⲁ ⲛⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ 1 Keph. 233.24. The phrase is used twice for a king in a Coptic historical text. Pedersen, "A Manichaean Historical Text," 196 and 198. For more references to the Greek use of the term, see S. Daris, *Il lessico latino nel greco d'Egitto* (Barcelona: Institut de teologia fonamental, seminari de papirologia, 1991), 88. The rhetorical usage of "patron" in fourth-century papyri is discussed in D. Rathbone, "Villages and Patronage in Fourth-Century Egypt: The Case of P.Ross.Georg. 3.8," *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 45 (2008): 195–199.

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“Those Who Give Rest”

“Elect and catechumens” are mentioned in close association with “those who give you rest” (ⲁⲛⲉⲧϯ ⲙ̄ⲧⲁⲛ ⲛⲉⲕ) in the three greeting sections of Orion’s letters. Who are these rest givers? “Rest” (ⲙ̄ⲧⲟⲛ in Coptic, ἀνάπαυσις in Greek) is part of a complex, semantic web of meaning, in which religious concepts about heavenly peace, salvation, and a state of unshakenness play a role. In a minimalist reading of the Kellis passages, alternative renderings like “everyone who pleases you” and “peace of mind in word and deed” must be taken into consideration.[50] “Rest” was a broad metaphor. Despite this broad range of meaning, almost no other personal letters outside this corpus use ϯ ⲙ̄ⲧⲁⲛ (the two exceptions stem from Christian letters). Its usage in the context of other Manichaean self-designators in P.Kellis v Copt. 15, 16 and 17 suggests that Orion alluded to a specifically Manichaean notion.[51] In fact, the position of the phrase in relation to “elect and catechumens” points to a religious interpretation. Could it have denoted a parallel reiteration of one of these two segments of the Manichaean community?[52] In P.Kellis v Copt. 15 and 16, the phrase can be read as a formulaic repetition of “the elect and catechumens,” which appears earlier in the sentence, while it seems that the elect are replaced by “they who give rest to you” (ⲛⲉ̣ⲧ̣ϯ̣ⲙ̣ⲧ̣ⲁ̣ⲛ) in P.Kellis v Copt. 17.

Manichaean theological and liturgical documents attribute rest to both catechumens and elect. In the Manichaean psalms, the elect are called “men of rest.” This rest is defined by their ascetic practice, which is, in turn, a gift from God, who is called the “giver of rest.”[53] In the *Kephalaia*, the catechumens are those who give rest, because “the holy church has no place of rest in this entire world except for through the catechumens who listen to it as [...] only

50 ⲁⲛⲉⲧϯⲙ̄ⲧⲁⲛ <ⲛ̄>ϩⲏⲧ ⲛⲉⲕ ϩⲛ ⲡⲥⲉϫⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡϩⲱⲃ P.Kellis v Copt. 35.47 cf. 36.17. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 241; Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 53. In one of the letters (P.Kellis VII Copt. 80.26–27), ⲙⲧⲁⲛ is translated with (financial) “benefit.” Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 123; See also Crum, *CD*, 193b–196a.

51 The edition refers to the possible parallels in Christian formulas in the letters published in W.E. Crum, ed., *Coptic Manuscripts Brought from the Fayyum by W.M. Flinders Petrie* (London: Nutt, 1893), 23, 37 and 53.

52 The phrase is used in P.Kellis v Copt. 15.28, 16.41, 17.53, 35.47, 36.14 and P.Kellis VII Copt. 115.40.

53 God is the giver of rest in 2 PsB. 155.16–42. Elect are the men of rest in 2 PsB. 170.16 and in 1 Keph. 79, 191.9–192.3, where their ascetic practice is defined as dwelling in the rest. In one of the Kellis texts, rest is promised as an eschatological gift (P.Kellis VI Copt. 54.64). On the virtue of being “unmoved” and the desire for “rest,” see Mirecki, Gardner, and Alcock, “Magical Spell, Manichaean Letter,” 5; Williams, *The Immovable Race*, 1–7 and 221. In the Coptic version of the ten advantages of the Manichaean church, the steadfast stance and unshakenness of the church is listed as the number three reason why the Manichaean church is superior over all others (1 Keph. 151, 372.1–10).

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with the catechumens who give it rest (м̄таⲛ)."[54] Another chapter specifically connects "rest" to daily almsgiving and healing when Mani forgives all the sins done to the Living Soul. It reads, "for all that you do to this alms on that day you do to cause it to be healed. You are bringing this alms offering that you have made to life and rest (м̄таⲛ)."[55] This connection to almsgiving, the central defining feature of the Manichaean catechumenate, strongly suggests that readers familiar with Manichaean theology would identify catechumens with the phrase "those who give you rest."

Metaphors of Belonging

Belonging was sometimes expressed by the authors of the Kellis letters with some elegance, especially when religious groupness was implied. They employ designators such as "kingdom of the saints," "those of this word," "the members of the holy church," "worthy members," "beloved of my limbs," and the "good limb of the Light Mind." With the exception of the latter phrase, all these metaphors of belonging carried both Christian and Manichaean connotations.[56] An ancient audience would have mostly heard a "warm Christian piety," if they were not familiar with Coptic Manichaean texts building on Pauline theology.[57]

The image of "limbs" for community members and transempirical beings is common in Manichaean theological texts.[58] The letter writers drew on the image of the Manichaean church as a communal body in which the members constituted limbs, as it did, for example, in the *Kephalaia*, where Mani addresses his disciples as "my brothers and my limbs."[59] Since the equation of church and body has Pauline roots, we find "limbs" used extensively as a metaphor of belonging in Coptic apocryphal literature, but it is never employed as a self-designator in other Greek or Coptic personal letters.[60] The explicit association between "limbs" and the Light Mind (ⲡ̣ⲛⲟⲩⲥ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲁϊⲛⲉ, in P.Kellis v

54 ⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ϩⲱⲱⲥ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲥ ⲙⲁⲛ̄ⲙ̄ⲧⲁⲛ ⲙ̄ⲙⲉⲩ ϩⲙ̄ ⲡⲓⲕⲟⲥⲙⲟⲥ ⲧⲏⲣϥ̄ ⲉⲓⲙⲏⲧⲓ ϩⲓⲧⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ⲕⲁⲧⲏⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ ⲉⲧⲥⲱⲧⲙ̄ ⲁⲣⲁⲥ ⲉⲣⲉ..... ⲙ̣ⲙⲉⲧⲉ ϩⲁⲧⲛ̄ ⲛⲕⲁⲧⲏⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ ⲉⲧϯ ⲙ̄ⲧⲁⲛ ⲛⲉⲥ 1 Keph. 87, 217.20–23.

55 ⲉⲡⲉⲓⲇⲏ ⲡⲉⲧⲕⲉⲓⲣⲉ ⲙⲙⲁϥ ⲧⲏ[ⲣϥ ⲁ]ϯⲙⲛⲧⲛⲁⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲓϩⲟⲟⲩ ⲉⲧⲙ̄ⲙⲉⲩ ⲉⲕⲉⲓⲣⲉ ⲙⲙⲁϥ ⲁ̣[ⲧⲣⲥ]ⲧⲗϭⲟ ⲉⲕⲉⲓⲛⲉ ⲛ̄ϯⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲛⲁⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲕⲉϊⲧⲥ ⲁⲡⲱⲛϩ ⲙⲛ ⲡⲙⲧⲁⲛ 1 Keph 93, 236.24–27.

56 Some examples are discussed in Choat, *Belief and Cult*, 57–73.

57 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 80.

58 Middle Persian and Parthian texts use "limbs" to designate the two groups of elect and auditors. Similar phrases are used for the process of salvation, in which the Primordial Man and the Manichaeans have to collect their limbs. BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 27 and 223.

59 ⲛⲁⲙⲉⲗⲟⲥ 1 Keph. 41.26, 144.2, 213.3, 285.21.

60 For example, in the Coptic *Investiture of the Archangel Michael*, 3.11, 7.19, 11.30 etc. (online translation by A. Alcock).

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Copt. 31.3–4) sets it apart as a Manichaean designator.[61] Thus, the combination of "limbs" and "holy church" in "the limbs of the holy church" (ⲙ̄ⲙ̣ⲉ̣ⲗ̣ⲟⲥ ⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗ̣ⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ, P.Kellis V Copt. 31.2–3) carries Manichaean connotations. Coptic Manichaean theological and liturgical documents frequently use "church" to mean the collective of all Manichaeans, often with additional designators, such as "church of the faithful" in the Kellis version of Mani's *Epistles*, or "holy church" in the *Kephalaia* and *Psalmbook* (see the list at the end of the chapter).

From a performance perspective, it is important to stress that the more marked phrases (like the phrase "holy church") are not represented only in the letters of the elect, but also occasionally in the letters of Orion (referring to "limbs"), Makarios ("everyone who wishes our word," and "children of the living race"), and an anonymous author ("limbs," and "kingdom of the saints").[62]

Ascribed Virtues

Elaborate self-designators often functioned in the context of epistolary politeness strategies, and are therefore filled with words of praise. At least two personal letters alluded to the goods or benefits given by catechumens as "fruits" (ⲕⲁⲣⲡⲟⲥ), a term not uncommon in Manichaean theological texts (in 2 PsB. 58.9–10, the church is the tree and the catechumens its fruit). Manichaean agricultural metaphors, sometimes closely related to New Testament parables about trees and fruitfulness, included images of trees in blossom and trees that sprout and are full of fruits (1 PsB. 119, 2 PsB. 91 and 175, cf. P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 42.22–25).[63] Such metaphors were used to frame catechumens as good and worthwhile members of the community, and were aimed at gift exchange and mutual support. In the letter to Eirene (cited above), her character is praised as a "good tree whose fruit never withers." Similarly, Makarios addresses his wife (and her family?) as the "good caretakers, the fruit of the flourishing tree, and the blossoms of love."[64] These passages come across as flattery – not

61 Samuel Lieu has recently noted that the figure of the Light Mind is central in many Manichaean texts, but is never mentioned by outsider observers like Augustine. S.N.C. Lieu, "Christianity and Manichaeism," in *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, ed. A. Casiday and F. Norris (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 289.

62 The address of P.Kellis V Copt. 34 is illegible, but the heavy usage of religious terminology shows similarities with the letters of the elect.

63 J.K. Coyle, "Good Tree, Bad Tree: The Matthean/Lukan Paradigm in Manichaeism and Its Opponents," in *Manichaeism and Its Legacy* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 65–88.

64 ⲡϣⲏⲛ ⲉⲧⲁⲛⲓⲧ ⲉⲧⲉⲙⲁ ⲡⲉϥⲕⲁⲣⲡⲟⲥ ϩⲱϭⲙ̄ ⲁⲛⲏϩⲉ, "good tree whose fruit never withers" P.Kellis V Copt. 32.4–5. ⲛ̄ϥⲁïⲣ̣[ⲁ]ⲩϣ ⲉ̣ⲧⲁⲛⲓⲧ … ⲛ̄ⲕⲁⲣ̣ⲡⲟⲥ ⲙ̄ⲡϣ̣ⲏⲛ ⲉⲧⲣⲁⲩⲧ ⲛ̄ϯⲟⲩⲱ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ, "the good care-takers, the fruit of the flourishing tree and the blossoms of love" P.Kellis V Copt. 22.4–6.

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uncommon in personal letters from this period – but they also convey the author's expectations about the *fruitful* gifts recipients should bring. Why Makarios used agricultural metaphors is unclear. Since the letter deals with a conflict about a book, preparations for Easter, and, possibly, situations of religious maltreatment (P.Kellis v Copt. 22), could it be that his religious repertoire was triggered by the needs of his situation?

Other expressions with ascribed virtues, such as "the favoured, blessed, god-loving souls" (ⲙ̣ⲯ̣[ⲩ]ⲭⲁ̣ⲩⲉ ⲉⲧⲥⲙⲁⲙⲁⲧ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲟⲥ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲓ̈ⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ P.Kellis v Copt. 31.5–6), belong to the marked politeness strategies of the elect's fund-raising letters. The central role of the virtue of love (*agape*) is noteworthy in greetings to "beloved brothers" and "my loved ones" (ⲛⲁⲙⲉⲣ̣ⲉⲧⲉ). Formulaic greetings with the word "love" included designators like, "my loved one of my soul, gladness of my spirit,"[65] "loved one of my soul and my spirit,"[66] and the "loved ones who are honoured of my soul."[67] Such forms of address are common in ancient Christian letters, where the adjective "beloved" is considered one of the markers of Christian authorship.[68] Likewise for Manichaeans, even if a letter contained complaints, tough remarks, or critique, the introductory praise of the recipient's virtues with friendly and kind designators upheld the image of loving family relations, either as a matter of good style, or in imitation of Mani's *Epistles*.

What stands out in comparison to frequent references to love in the personal letters is the relative absence of designators like "the faithful," "the believers," or "the righteous." While Coptic Manichaean texts frequently conceptualize their audience with such ascribed virtues, only one Greek Manichaean letter uses "the pious" as a form of address.

Religious and Institutional Titles

Religious identifications are often inferred on the basis of occasional references to institutional titles in legal documents and personal letters. Among the references to religious and institutional titles, we find individuals such as Stonios, the local Kellis priest of the temple of Tutu (P.Kellis I Gr. 13), Iakob, son of Besis, "the priest, reader of the catholic church,"[69] and other Christian

65 [ⲡϣⲟ]ⲩⲙⲉⲓ̈ⲉ ⲛ̄[ⲧⲁⲯⲩⲭⲏ ⲡⲟⲩⲣⲁⲧ] ⲛ̣̄ⲡⲁⲡⲛⲉⲩ[ⲙⲁ....] P.Kellis v Copt. 14.3–5.

66 ⲡⲙⲉⲣⲓⲧ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲯⲩⲭⲏ̣ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲁⲡ̣ⲛ̄ⲁ P.Kellis v Copt. 15.1–2.

67 ⲛⲁⲙⲉⲣ̣ⲉⲧⲉ [ⲉ]ⲧ̣ⲁⲓ̈ⲁⲓ̈ⲧ ⲛⲧ̣[ⲟⲧ]ⲥ̣ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲯⲩⲭⲏ P.Kellis v Copt. 20.1–2.

68 On the formulaic nature of the address "loved" brothers, see Choat, *Belief and Cult*, 94.

69 Αὐρήλιος Ἰακῶβ Βήσιος πρ(εσβυτέρου) ἀναγνώστης καθολικῆς ἐκε̣λησίας (l. ἐκκλησίας) ἔγραψα ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς γράμματα μὴ εἰδυίης. P.Kellis I Gr. 32.20–23. T. Derda and E. Wipszycka, "L'emploi des titres abba, apa et papas dans l'Égypte byzantine," *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 24 (1994): 23–56. P.Kellis I Gr. 24.3, 48.20 and 58.8 also mention "catholic

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priests (P.Kellis I Gr. 48 and 58). Some of the presbyter(s) and the subdeacon Hor, addressed in a letter from House 4, were most probably officials of the Christian church.[70] These titles were not immediately used to mark a specifically religious identity, nor were they used to reveal more detailed information about the ecclesiastical hierarchy in the oasis, Alexandria, or the Roman Empire at large.[71] Rather, titles are chance appearances, used to identify witnesses or scribes with their social position within village society. Institutional titles provided support in specific situations where social status was of importance. For example, this occurred with the deacons in the official declaration to the *dux* (P.Kellis I Gr. 24).[72]

Some of the religious titles may have referred to Manichaean elect in their role as members of an ecclesiastical hierarchy. The letter of the anonymous "Teacher" (ⲡⲥⲁϩ) is a case in point, especially since he also addresses "all the [Manichaean?] presbyters" (ⲙ̣ⲡⲣⲉⲥⲃ[ⲩⲧ]ⲉⲣⲟⲥ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ P.Kellis VII Copt. 61.2). Another member of the elect, Apa Lysimachos, mentions unspecified "bishops" (P.Kellis V Copt. 31.4), and a Manichaean lector in need of a (note)book (P.Kellis I Gr. 67). While it is tempting to extend these Manichaean designations to other finds, in other letters it is almost always unclear whether titles refer to Christian or Manichaean institutionalized offices.[73] One of Orion's letters, for example, refers to "Sa..ren the presbyter" (P.Kellis V Copt. 18), who is probably to be identified with "brother Saren" in P.Kellis VII Copt. 58. Orion's Manichaean terminology suggests a Manichaean background, but it is also possible that he interacted with non-Manichaean Christian church officials on a regular basis (see chapter 4). Such ecclesiastical titles – if they belonged to Manichaean

church." Worp, *GPK1*, 74. Unconvincing is, in my opinion, the examination of Le Tiec, who erroneously assumes all inhabitants of House 3 must have been Manichaeans. P.A. le Tiec, "Le temple de Toutou et l'histoire des manichéens à Kellis," *Journal of Coptic Studies* 15 (2013): 75–85.

70 P.Kellis VII Copt. 124. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 276–280.

71 See Luijendijk, *Greetings in the Lord*, 81–154 on the third-century bishop Sotas. One of the first explicit identifications of someone as "a Christian" appears in a third-century list (SB 16.12497). This designator has been interpreted as contextual information, used to identify and locate the individual and differentiate him from others with the same name. M. Choat et al., "The World of the Nile," in *Early Christianity in Contexts: An Exploration Accross Cultures and Continents*, ed. W. Tabbernee (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016), 192. *Contra* the interpretation by van Minnen, who suggests the designation was used pejorative. P. van Minnen, "The Roots of Egyptian Christianity," *Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete* 40, no. 1 (1994): 74–77. On the chance appearances of religious officials, see Choat, *Belief and Cult*, 57–73.

72 Worp, *GPK* 1, 75.

73 Deacons: P.Kellis V Copt. 19.48, P.Kellis VII Copt 72.36, 124.40. Presbyter: P.Kellis V Copt. 18.22, P.Kellis VII Copt. 61.2, 92.34, 124.1. Bishop: P.Kellis V Copt. 30.4.

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church officials – likely refer to members of the elect, as Manichaean theological texts excluded catechumens from fulfilling these roles.[74]

More frequently occurring are the male *apa* and female *ama* titles, derived from paternal and maternal designations and developed into honorific titles (for example Apa Besas in P.Kellis VII Copt. 124).[75] In the Kellis documents, these titles are used for Manichaean leaders, like Apa Lysimachos, one of the elect with strong ties to inhabitants of Kellis (P.Kellis V Copt. 21 and 24). He seems to have intimate knowledge of the Manichaean hierarchy, since he mentions bishops in his letter to Hor (P.Kellis V Copt. 30) and a Syriac lector in his letter to Theognostos (P.Kellis I Gr.67). As seen in chapter 1, Apa Lysimachos was authorized to make decisions about the travel schedule, and he may have had a retinue of catechumens following him. The female equivalent, *ama*, is less well known and only surfaces in one of the Kellis letters: "Zosime greets you; and Ama Theodora and Dorothea and Ama Tatou; and Ama Tapshai and her daughter and sons."[76] While *apa* is used in the Manichaean *Psalmbook*'s doxologies (2 PsB. 47.22–23, 149.30, 155.42, 166.22, and 176.10), *ama* is never used in Coptic Manichaean texts. The most striking feature is that this letter mentions Ama Tapshai's children, which may suggest that these *amas* were catechumens instead of elect.[77] If that is the case, *ama* is used here in a more traditional

74 On the church hierarchy and the origin of the number of leaders (12 Teachers, 72 bishops, 360 presbyters), see C. Leurini, "The Manichaean Church between Earth and Paradise," in *New Light on Manichaeism*, ed. J.D. BeDuhn (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 169–79; Leurini, *The Manichaean Church*, 87–220.

75 Malcolm Choat notes that the use of "Apa" is not exclusively Christian, but is often found in a Christian context. It was more commonly used than monastic titles, and was not an indicator of an ecclesiastical office. Choat, *Belief and Cult*, 68–70; On the use of "Apa" in letters, see M.A. Eissa, "The Use of the Title Apa for the Sender in an Opening Epistolary Formula," *Journal of Coptic studies* 16 (2014): 115–24.

76 ⲍⲱⲥⲓⲙⲉ ϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲁⲣⲁⲕ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲁⲙⲁ ⲑⲉⲟⲇⲱⲣⲁ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲇ̣ⲱⲣ̣ⲟⲑⲉⲁ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲁⲙⲁ ⲧⲁⲧⲟⲩ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲁⲙⲁ ⲧ̣ⲁ̣ⲡ̣ϣⲁϊ̣ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲧⲉⲥϣⲉⲣⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛⲉⲥϣⲏⲣⲉ P.Kellis VII Copt. 80.33–36. Amma 'assumes the meaning "ascetic" or "clerical personality," according to S. Elm, *'Virgins of God': The Making of Asceticism in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), 246. Blumell lists a large number of Greek inscriptions and papyri and argues (on the basis of SB VIII 9882) that "ama" developed from a maternal title to a Christian honorific title. L.H. Blumell, "A New Jewish Epitaph Commemorating Care for Orphans," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 47, no. 3 (2016): 321.

77 Although she could have had children before she became a member of the elect. Unfortunately, little is known about the way one became elect. Note that in all other letters Tapshai is designated as "mother." Doctrinal texts also urged catechumens to become perfect by refraining from procreation (1 Keph. 91, 228.24, 229.12). On the evidence for female Manichaean elect, see Kristionat, *Zwischen Selbstverständlichkeit und Schweigen*, 72, 190; J.K. Coyle, "Prolegomena to a Study of Women in Manichaeism," in *The Light and the Darkness: Studies in Manichaeism and Its World*, ed. P.A. Mirecki and J.D. BeDuhn (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 141–54.

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sense to honor women as mothers in contrast to the honorific (and religiously marked) use of the title *apa*.

Did Manichaeans Call Themselves Christians?

The prominence of Christian phrases and formulas in the Kellis letters has contributed to the identification of Manichaeans in Kellis as regarding themselves "as Christians, the true (and perhaps more effective or spiritual) church."[78] In the Kellis papyri, however, Manichaeans never used this self-designator. In fact, even Pedersen, who argues that some Manichaeans in the Latin West considered themselves Christians, stresses the absence of "Christian" as an insider name or *autonym* of Egyptian Manichaeans. Only two fragmentary passages in Coptic Manichaean literature seem to have used ⲛⲭⲣⲏⲥⲧⲓⲁⲛⲟⲥ or ⲛⲭⲣⲓⲥⲧⲓⲁⲛⲟⲥ as a designator, but both are difficult to interpret. The first passage may have described non-Manichaean Christians (Hom. 72.9), while in the second passage a naming practice used among Christians is discussed in relation to Mani's name (1 Keph. 105, 258.29). The latter passage is tantalizing, as it seems to imply that Mani called his people by his own name, even though the designator "Manichaean" is hardly ever used by Manichaeans.[79] This Kephalaia chapter, therefore, offers little solid evidence for self-designators used in the community. Pedersen concludes that there is "no clear evidence for any use of the name 'Christian' as an autonym" among Manichaeans in Egypt.[80] This stands against the otherwise stimulating argument by Richard Lim that "the people whom we have grown accustomed to calling Manichaeans mainly represented themselves as Christians."[81]

As observed earlier, many of the letter's expressions resemble Christian letters from the same period. The phrase "holy church," common in Manichaean theological texts, is used twice as a self-designator in the Kellis letters (ⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ

78 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 73.

79 Pedersen, "Manichaean Self-Designations," 189–90. Engaging the earlier conceptual distinction between Christians and Manichaeans in Alexander Böhlig's interpretation of 1 Keph. 105. A. Böhlig, "Christliche Wurzeln in Manichäismus," in *Mysterion und Wahrheit* (Leiden: Brill, 1968), 204–5.

80 Pedersen, "Manichaean Self-Designations," 192. For Augustine, on the other hand, Manichaeans belonged to the wrong type of *Christian* religion. This is visible, in particular, in his debates with the Manichaeans Fortunatus and Faustus. J. van Oort, "Augustine and Manichaeism: An Introductory Overview," *Mani and Augustine: Collected Essays on Mani, Manichaeism and Augustine* (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 141. For an emphasis on the self-identification approach to classification, see J.D. BeDuhn, "'Not to Depart from Christ': Augustine between 'Manichaean' and 'Catholic' Christianity," in *Augustine and Manichaean Christianity*, ed. J. van Oort (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 16.

81 Lim, "Nomen Manichaeorum," 147.

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ϵⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ P.Kellis V Copt. 31.2–3 and 32.1–2). On the one hand, this phrase connects with the widespread conceptualization of Christian "churches," while on the other hand, the adjective "holy" seems to imply a distinction from other churches. This distinction remains implicit. A direct contrast with the "catholic church" referred to in other papyrus documents (P.Kellis I Gr. 24.3, 32.21, 58.8) is not probable. The two phrases are never employed in opposition, nor is there any trace of local polemic against an *unholy* or *polluted* church. A more plausible interpretation of the label "catholic" (καθολική) in the fourth century is that it designated the most important church building of the village, which must have been the Large East Church in Kellis.[82] By claiming to be a "holy church," the Manichaeans of Kellis inhabited an increasingly Christianized social imaginary, but did not explicitly define themselves either *as* Christians, or in opposition to Christians. This is an ambiguity that would be rendered invisible if we reclassify Manichaeans as Christians.

Collectives: "Those of the Household"

In contrast with the occasional use of explicit Manichaean and religiously marked self-designators, the use of local collective designators stands out as widespread. Greek legal papyri frequently identify individuals through their place of residence, and some Coptic personal letters add similar residential information, like with Philammon and Pamour of Tjkoou (P.Kellis V Copt. 20.29). Collectives were used more frequent, for example in the greetings to those belonging to someone's "household" (ⲡⲏⲓ̈) or "neighborhood" (ⲣⲁⲟⲩⲏ). Those belonging to these social units are ambiguously called "people" (ⲣⲱⲙⲉ) in some of the Coptic letters. The most remarkable instance of this collective household language is found in Matthaios's letter to Maria (P.Kellis V Copt. 25), where he sends greetings to a series of households, almost exclusively associated with female figures:[83]

> Greet for me Marshe and her brother, each by name, and their children and their whole house. Greet for me my mother Tashai and her children. Greet for me my mother Talaphanti and her children and her whole house. Greet for me my mother Louiepshai and her whole house and her

82 E. Wipszycka, "Καθολική et les autres épithètes qualifiant le nom Ἐκκλησία: Contribution à l'étude de l'ordre hiérarchique des églises dans l'Égypte byzantine," *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 24 (1994): 180–210. In the course of the fourth century, this title designates churches affiliated with the Alexandrian church. Wipszycka, *The Alexandrian Church*, 108–10.

83 "[T]he majority of which cluster around a matriarch." Gardner, "Some Comments on Kinship Terms," 136.

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> children. Greet for me my brother Andreas, with his whole house and his people.[84]

This network of households may have extended beyond Kellis itself, but it lacks any conspicuous religious connotation.[85]

The household was a focal point of meeting and greeting. Coptic letters often express the wish to "be able to greet you in my house," and one letter expresses the writer's joy about the "health of the household."[86] Greek personal letters contained polite greetings to similar collectives, like "all those in the house" or "all your people." This latter designator may well have indicated family members, as in the second century papyrus P.Giss. III 97. Here, the addressees' people are on the same level as the author's children: "[B]efore everything I pray that you are well with all your people and I am also (well) with my children," and "salute all the people of our family by name."[87] In Kellis, various other examples of greetings to "people" are attested.[88] P.Kellis VII Copt. 103.35 refers to "my people" (ⲁⲛⲁⲣ̣[ⲱⲙⲉ]) as those who have solved a problem and bought

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84 ϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ⲁⲙⲁⲣϣⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛⲉⲥⲥⲛⲏⲩ ⲕⲁ<ⲧⲁ> ⲡⲟⲩⲣⲉⲛ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛⲟⲩϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲟⲩⲏⲓ̈ ⲧⲏⲣϥ̄ ϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ⲁⲧⲁⲙⲟ ⲧⲁϣⲁⲓ̈ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛⲉⲥϣⲏⲣⲉ· ⲱⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ⲁⲧⲁⲙⲟ ⲧⲁⲗⲁⲫⲁⲛⲧⲓ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛⲉⲥϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲥ̄ⲏⲓ̈ ⲧⲏⲣϥ̄ ϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ⲁⲧⲁⲙⲟ ⲗⲟⲩⲓ̈ⲉⲡϣⲁⲓ̈ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲥ̄ⲏⲓ̈ ⲧⲏⲣϥ̄ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛⲉⲥϣⲏⲣⲉ ϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ⲁⲡⲁⲥⲁⲛ ⲁⲛⲇⲣⲉⲁⲥ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡϥ̄ⲏⲓ̈ ⲧⲏⲣϥ̄ ⲙⲛ ⲛⲉϥ̣ⲣ̣ⲱ̣ⲙⲉ P.Kellis V Copt. 25.69–74.

85 Some of these people with their households did not live in the direct neighborhood, but further away. Marshe may be identified with Marsis, who lived in Aphrodite. Mother Tashai (Tapshai?) is associated with the village of Tkou (P.Kellis V Copt. 19 and 43). According to Gardner, this place name (spelled Tjkoou in P.Kellis V Copt. 20.29) was the Coptic name for Aphrodite in the Antaiopolite nome. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 170. Further support for this interpretation is found in P.Kellis V Copt. 19, where Matthaios is ordered to send something to "Siaout (Assiut, Lycopolis), to the house of Aristakena ... Antinoe....." ⲁⲥⲓⲁⲟⲩⲧ̄ ⲁ̣ⲡⲏⲓ ⲛ̄ⲁⲣⲓⲥⲧⲁϭⲉⲛⲁ ⲉ̣ⲛ̣ ..[.....] ⲁⲛⲧⲓⲛⲟⲟⲩ P.Kellis V Copt. 19.43–44. It seems likely to situate the Makarios family in Antinoe and Aristakena in Siaout. Moreover, she is probably not to be identified with the Aristakenia greeted by Orion as "my sister" (P.Kellis V Copt. 17.52). Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 22. In another letter Pamour is asked to bring books from (the place of) father Pabo to Pekos in Kellis and certain things have to be sent to "the house of father Pebo" (ⲁⲡⲏⲓ̈ ⲙ̄ⲡⲓⲱⲧ ⲡⲉⲃⲟ P.Kellis VII Copt. 120.14–15).

86 ⲁⲣⲁⲕ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛⲉⲧϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲏⲓ̈ ⲧⲏ̣ⲣ̣ⲟⲩ P.Kellis V Copt. 15.33 and rejoice in P.Kellis VII Copt. 77.10–11 about ⲡⲟⲩϫⲉⲓ̈ⲧⲉ ⲙⲡⲏⲓ̈.

87 Cited in Bagnall and Cribiore, *Women's Letters*, 181. Other examples of the use of this type of collectives are found in R. Alston, "Searching for the Romano-Egyptian Family," in *The Roman Family in the Empire: Rome, Italy, and Beyond*, ed. M. George (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 152.

88 Gardner, "Some Comments on Kinship Terms," 136, mentioning P.Kellis V Copt. 41 "with all our people"; P.Kellis V Copt. 26 greets "Isi and her people" and in another section, greeting "you and all your people."

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the dye (?). Gardner suggests that "our people" was used for the extended family, while "the whole house" referred to the actual family unit living together under one roof.[89] In one instance, the collective "my people" was designated as "everyone who loves you."[90] In a number of Coptic letters, the greetings are extended to "each one of the neighborhood."[91] In one letter, the author combined the two, greeting "you and all of the household and the neighborhood."[92] This suggests that a broader village or neighborhood sensibility was present. None of these examples add further details. Such collectives were not religious in nature; they belonged to the ordinary world in which villagers upheld relations through correspondence, and included extensive greetings to all those who were close to them.

Summary: Reflecting Sectarianism?

By way of summary, I would like to return to the postulation that Manichaeism was sectarian in nature. In sociological studies, sects are groups that exists in a state of tension with society.[93] This can be measured by (1) a high level of social difference with deviant norms, beliefs, and most of all, behavior[94]; (2) a high level of antagonism, with particularistic beliefs and an excluding stance; (3) the practice of separation: favoring social relations among insiders and restricting social interactions with outsiders. Previous examinations of the Kellis papyri have detected some of these characteristics. Twenty years ago, Samuel Lieu stated that the Manichaean families

> saw themselves as a chosen elite in the Christian sense. They promoted themselves as the Church of the Paraclete and as such were *the* Christians in the Dakhleh Oasis. The lack of a strong presence of other forms

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89 Gardner, "Some Comments on Kinship Terms," 136.

90 [ⲟⲩ]ⲁ̣ⲛ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲉϥⲙⲉϊⲉ ⲙ̣̄ⲙ̣ⲱ[ⲧ]ⲛ̣̄ P.Kellis v Copt. 29.19.

91 ϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲏϊ ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲛⲉⲧⲣⲁ̣ⲟⲩⲏ P.Kellis v Copt. 36.39–40, 39.5, ⲣⲙ̄ⲣⲉ̣ⲟⲩⲏⲧⲟⲩ P.Kellis vii Copt. 71.31, ⲙⲛ̄ ⲧⲣⲉⲟⲩⲏ 77.4, ϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲏϊ ⲁⲧⲣⲁⲟⲩⲏ̣ 85.8 and 96.28.

92 [ϯϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲁⲣⲟ] ⲧⲟⲛⲟ̣ⲩ̣ ⲛ̣ⲧ̣ⲟ ⲙⲛ̣̄ ⲛⲁⲡ[ⲏϊ ⲧⲏ]ⲣ̣ⲟ̣ⲩ̣ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛⲁ̣ⲧ̣ⲣⲁ̣ⲟⲩⲏ P.Kellis v Copt. 39.3–5.

93 A useful summary of church-sect typologies is found in L.L. Grabbe, "When Is a Sect a Sect – or Not? Groups and Movements in the Second Temple Period," in *Sectarianism in Early Judaism*, ed. D.J. Chalcraft (London: Acumen Publishing, 2007), 125; B.R. Wilson, *Religious Sects: A Sociological Study* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1970), 14–18; R. Stark and W.S. Bainbridge, *A Theory of Religion* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1987), 121–28.

94 C. Wassen and J. Jokiranta, "Groups in Tension: Sectarianism in the Damascus Document and the Community Rule," in *Sectarianism in Early Judaism*, ed. D.J. Chalcraft (London: Acumen Publishing, 2007), 209.

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> of Christianity in the region probably enabled this elite self-identity to develop.[95]

In contrast to this characterization, the self-designators used in the Kellis letters reveal multiple roles or identities, only sometimes stressing religious belonging.

Several self-designators expressed a distinction between Manichaeans and non-Manichaeans. The "holy church" and the "children of the living race" seem to imply an antagonistic position toward an unholy church, or those who do not belong to a "living race," but this position is never explicitly made. Most of these marked self-designators derive from the letters of the elect, in which the authors employ metaphors of belonging to establish commonality with the addressees. Peter Brown is, therefore, incorrect when he reads spiritual friendship into the "daughters of the Light Mind" without identifying the underlying flattery-and-fundraising strategies of the elect. An emphasis on belonging to the in-group was expressed with kinship terminology, ethnic reasoning, and metaphors of belonging. Some of these designators revealed a social imaginary that was tied to Manichaean narratives – albeit never directly employing Mani's name[96] – but many other phrases derived from a shared Christian and Manichaean repertoire that may not have stood out when read out loud in a village context. On the contrary, most letter writers described themselves and their addressees in terms of kinship, or with phrases associated with a place of residence or a village identity. Frequent greetings to "those of the household" show that these people worked with a broad social imaginary that included more than the imagined religious community. The multiplicity of terminology and the sometimes ambiguous way of phrasing reminds us that even the most religiously involved individuals were also fathers, neighbors, and coworkers within mundane networks of social interaction.

95 Lieu, "Self-Identity of the Manichaeans," 227 (his capitals) and page 224 (his capitals and emphasis).

96 In contrast to Manichaeans in the Latin West, Manichaeans in Egypt never used "Manichaean" as a label. The one exception is a *Kephalaia* chapter that seems to suggest that Mani called his disciples "with my name" (ⲙⲡⲁⲣⲉⲛ 1 Keph. 105, 259.11–13). See the evaluation of Böhlig's argument in Pedersen, "Manichaean Self-Designations," 191. In another passage, there is another questionable restoration suggesting the use of the name "Manichaeans" (1 Keph. 271.15 in the reading of Böhlig, but this is not followed by Pedersen and Gardner). Böhlig, "Zum Selbstverständnis des Manichäismus," 325.

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Excursus: Coptic as a Community-Specific Language?

From an *Everyday Groupness* perspective, Manichaean linguistic repertoire did not simply represent Manichaeism; it set the stage for Manichaeanness. In the letter writers' language use, we see authors "constructing, as well as responding to, the social meaning of variation."[97] This way of talking *with* Manichaeism homes in on the question of when linguistic choices resonated with Manichaeanness.[98] It also opens doors for the possibility that less explicit phrases were used as part of insider language. Expressions that are only found within Manichaean settings, such as "whose name is sweet in my mouth" (ⲡⲉⲧⲉⲣⲉ ⲡⲉϥⲣⲉⲛ ϩⲁⲗϭ ϩⲛ̄ ⲣⲱϊ̈, P.Kellis V Copt. 37.3–4, cf. P.Kellis VII Copt. 63), are not directly related to Manichaeism, but belonged to the in-group repertoire of a community of practice. What about the Coptic language itself? Could the language and script have connoted a distinct, group-specific religious identity?

Using Coptic was a conspicuous choice in the fourth century, when most letters were written in Greek. Exactly how Coptic came into being, and how it came to replace Greek as the dominant language, is matter of debate. Most recently, Jean-Luc Fournet traced the development of Coptic from a vernacular language, to a domain specific language, to a full competitor of Greek in all domains of life.[99] For other scholars, Coptic was a mixture of Egyptian and Greek; it employed such a large number of Greek loanwords (roughly 20 percent) that it cannot have been the vernacular. Roger Bagnall, therefore, describes Coptic as "certainly invented, in the third century, with deliberateness" in bilingual literary milieus.[100] This invention may have started among the traditional temple elite, but Christianity's institutional strength sparked wider use of Coptic for religious texts.[101] The lion's share of the earliest Coptic

97 Eckert, *Linguistic Variation as Social Practice*, 3.

98 The notion of "talking *with* the nation" has been developed in Fox and Miller-Idris, "Everyday Nationhood," 540. See also the situational nature of speech utterances, discussed in P. Brown and C. Fraser, "Speech as a Marker of Situation," in *Social Markers in Speech*, ed. K.R. Scherer and H. Giles (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 33–62.

99 J.L. Fournet, *The Rise of Coptic: Egyptian Versus Greek in Late Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020).

100 Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 238.

101 For Frankfurter, Coptic originated amongst the temple priests, but it was developed and systematized in fourth-century Christian literature. Frankfurter, *Religion in Roman Egypt*, 259ff; M. Choat, "Epistolary Formulae in Early Coptic Letters," in *Actes du huitième congrès international d'études coptes*, ed. N. Bosson and A. Boud'hors (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 676. A Christian origin is defended by T.S. Richter, "Greek, Coptic, and the 'Language of the

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texts were monastic, gnostic, and Manichaean (such as the Nag Hammadi codices, or the Medinet Madi manuscripts).[102] This suggests a noticeable connection between religious groupness and linguistic variation. Could it have been a strategic choice to formulate theological texts, liturgical documents, and letters in Coptic? Is the prominence of Coptic in Kellis a social-religious clue?[103]

"Coptic" refers to the system of written Egyptian in Greek characters, with six to eight additional letters derived from Demotic; it was also filled with Greek loanwords.[104] It is known in several variations. The majority of the Kellis documents belong to the Lycopolitan L cluster (previously known as Akhmimic A2, associated with a geographical region), which was also used for the Medinet Madi documents. Most of the Kellis texts belong specifically to the variety known as L*, also used for the Coptic version of Mani's *Epistles*, though others were written in the strongly related L4 variant.[105] Though there were internal

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Hijra': Rise and Decline of the Coptic Language in Late Antique and Medieval Egypt," in *From Hellenism to Islam: Cultural and Linguistic Change in the Roman near East*, ed. H.M. Cotton, et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 401–46. Previous experiments with Egyptian written in Greek words, including the texts labeled Old Coptic were less systematized and they may point to the existence of "multiple independent developments of full writing systems based on Greek and Demotic signs used complementarily" instead of a single line of transmission between Old Coptic and Coptic. R.S. Bagnall, "Linguistic Change and Religious Change: Thinking About the Temples in the Fayoum in the Roman Period," in *Christianity and Monasticism in the Fayoum Oasis*, ed. G. Gabra (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2005), 18. This argument is made in relation to the ostracon from Kellis, published in I. Gardner, "An Old Coptic Ostracon from Ismant el-Kharab?," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 125 (1999): 195–200.

102 Choat argues that a direct connection to monasticism and the Coptic translation of the Bible is "too neat." Monasticism "did not create Coptic, and monks were not the first to use it: their contribution to the educational heritage was to consolidate the language rather than to form it." M. Choat, "Language and Culture in Late Antique Egypt," in *A Companion to Late Antiquity*, ed. P. Rousseau (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 352.

103 E.D. Zakrzewska, "'A Bilingual Language Variety' or 'the Language of the Pharaohs'? Coptic from the Perspective of Contact Linguistics," in *Greek Influence on Egyptian-Coptic: Contact-Inducted Change in an Ancient African Language*, ed. P. Dils, et al. (Hamburg: Widmaier Verlag, 2017), 115–53; E.D. Zakrzewska, "L* as a Secret Language: Social Functions of Early Coptic," in *Christianity and Monasticism in Middle Egypt: Al-Minya and Asyut*, ed. G. Gabra and H.N. Takla (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2015), 185–98.

104 Reintges considers Coptic a "new language form" with two parent languages: Greek and Egyptian. C.H. Reintges, "Coptic Egyptian as a Bilingual Language Variety," in *Lenguas en contacto: el testimonio escrito*, ed. P. Bádenas De La Peña and S. Torallas Tovar (Madrid: Consejo superiores de investigaciones científicas, 2004), 69–86.

105 T.Kellis II Copt. 7 and T.Kellis II Syr./Copt. 1 and 2 in L4. Differences between the clusters of language variations (or dialects) are discussed in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 90–95; Gardner, *KLT2*, 11–13; See also Schenke, "Rezension zu Iain Gardner," 225–7. Some of the personal letters fall between these two side of the spectrum. T.Kellis II Copt. 2,

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differences, nearly all authors used L variants. The main reason to consider the possibility that these language choices had group-specific connotations is the prominent exception to this pattern in the letters written in versions of Sahidic (P.Kellis VII Copt. 123, 124, 126–128). The content of these letters leads us to believe that they were written by non-Manichaean Christians.[106] In contrast to the majority of the L-variation texts, which were found in Houses 1–3, the Sahidic texts stem from House 4 and the temple area D/8. One could, therefore, suppose that Christians used Sahidic, while Manichaeans wrote in L variants.[107] Consequently, Ewa Zakrzewska argues that this pattern confirms that Manichaeans of Kellis were "well-educated counterculturists" who used Coptic as an "alternative literary language" to discuss new ideas.[108] Building upon sociolinguistic theory, she highlights several things that shape linguistic variation: communities of practice, frequent exchange, and social networks. Emerging religious milieus, whether Manichaean or early monastic, would have constituted such networks.

The clear-cut pattern – Manichaeans using L-variations in Houses 1–3 and Christians writing in Sahidic variations in House 4 – is disrupted by two texts from House 4 written in L-variations: a wooden tablet with a Manichaean

P.Kellis V Copt. 50 with Sahidic type vowels, P.Kellis V Copt. 44–48, P.Kellis VI Copt. 56 with Sahidic features, P.Kellis VII Copt. 122 belongs to the broad L-family. Gardner, *KLT1*, xv and 9.

106 Primarily because they mention a "subdeacon," two presbyters, the "good shepherd" (P.Kellis VII Copt. 124), and the bishop (P.Kellis VII Copt. 128). The editors note that the latter letter was marked by a large number of Greek loan words and they suggested that "the author was a Christian of substantial education." Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 295.

107 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 264. Discussed earlier at Gardner, *KLT1*, vii; Gardner, *KLT2*, 5.

108 Zakrzewska, "L* as a Secret Language," 192 and 197. Earlier building blocks include E.D. Zakrzewska, "Why Did Egyptians Write Coptic? The Rise of Coptic as a Literary Language," in *Copts in the Egyptian Society before and after the Muslim Conquest: Archaeological, Historical and Applied Studies*, ed. L. Mahmoud and A. Mansour (Alexandria: Bibliotheca Alexandrina, 2016), 211–19. Stephen Emmel has also explained the use of Coptic instead of Greek for the Nag Hammadi codices as a conscious attempt to create a "new esoteric-mystical Egyptian wisdom literature," emphasizing the esoteric nature of their literature. S. Emmel, "The Coptic Gnostic Texts as Witnesses to the Production and Transmission of Gnostic (and Other) Traditions," in *Das Thomasevangelium: Entstehung – Rezeption – Theologie*, ed. J. Frey, E.E. Popkes, and J. Schröter (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 48, even though he thinks their Coptic is barely comprehensible without Greek. For another discussion on the language of the NHC, see Lundhaug and Jenott, *The Monastic Origins of the Nag Hammadi Codices*, 94–101.

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psalm (T.Kellis II Copt. 7) and a personal letter (P.Kellis VII Copt. 122).[109] The differences between the L- and Sahidic language variations, moreover, are not large enough to classify either variation as an alternative literary language or associate them with an elite status. While it stood out from the more commonly used Greek, Coptic was used for a wide variety of mundane messages not exclusively addressed to fellow Manichaeans. Modern linguistic habits in the oasis – particularly before the introduction of television and radio in the 1980s – exhibit similar variations within a relatively small geographical and societal setting. Manfred Woidich has discerned at least three distinct dialect groups, most of which are now heavily influenced by the Egyptian spoken in Cairo.[110]

Remarkable social and linguistic differentiations are also visible in the code-switching between Greek and Coptic. In general, letters regarding legal arrangements or administrative duties were written in Greek, while family and household issues were expressed in Coptic.[111] However, Pamour and his brothers wrote to each other in both Greek and Coptic, and some letters even combined the two languages, indicating a bilingual context.[112] The Titoue family letters in House 2 show the same dynamic, as the archive comprised one personal letter in Coptic, one in Greek, and several administrative documents in Greek.[113] The correspondence about the monastic training of Shamoun's son Titoue was written in Coptic and in Greek (P.Kellis V Copt. 12 and P.Kellis I Gr. 12), maybe because of the alternating availability of Coptic and Greek scribes. Coptic letters often had a Greek address and introductory formula.[114] In the Makarios archive, the introductory formula is always in

109 This latter letter, moreover, contains prosopographical connections with individuals known from letters in House 3, including Pakous (husband of Chares?), Lammon, Papnoute, and Philammon.

110 Briefly discussed in Thurston, *Secrets of the Sands*, 334–7; M. Woidich, "Neue Daten aus Dakhla: Ismint in Zentral-Dakhla," In *Between the Atlantic and Indian Oceans: Studies on Contemporary Arabic Dialects*, ed. S. Procházka and V. Ritt-Benmimoun (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2008), 471–481.

111 Comparative questions about the relation between language variation and social identifications have been explored by Brubaker et al., *Everyday Ethnicity*, 239–64, which points to the asymmetry of bilingual practices at Cluj.

112 Compare P.Kellis I Gr. 71 Pamour to Psais with P.Kellis VII Copt. 64 Pamour to Psais. A Coptic personal letter addressing Psenpsais (?), presumably written by his mother Tehat, contains a Greek postscript by somebody else (P.Kellis V Copt. 43).

113 Discussed in S.J. Clackson, "Coptic or Greek? Bilingualism in the Papyri," in *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt from the Ptolemies to the Abbasids*, ed. A. Papaconstantinou (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 91.

114 R.S. Bagnall, *Everyday Writing in the Graeco-Roman East* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 80. Considers this "striking," but it is relatively common in other languages.

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Coptic, with one exception – there is one letter that switches the formula from Greek to Coptic halfway through.[115] Many other letters contained opening and closing formulas in Greek, apparently because they were written before the content of the letter was formulated.[116] This default Greek template filled in with Coptic content bespeaks a bilingual setting, which is also apparent in Makarios's reminder to his son: "study your psalms, whether Greek or Coptic, every day."[117]

Since most of the fourth-century literary texts in Coptic contained religious treatises, the language may have carried religious connotations. The personal letters from Kellis, on the other hand, are not exclusively about religious or group-specific affairs. They show the early application of Coptic for domestic purposes, dealing mostly with everyday issues and concerns.[118] They are not directly used to communicate countercultural ideas, nor is there a one-to-one correspondence with Manichaeanness. It is precisely the relative absence of explicit religious markers or countercultural notions that makes it difficult to discern the Manichaean background of some of these letters. The business content of P.Kellis VII Copt. 94, for example, shows no indication of a religious stance. It is perfectly possible that this letter was written to Kellites without Manichaean affiliation. The use of Coptic, then, did not solely correlate with a clearly demarcated religious group, but with a local social network that included family, village, and religious connections.

P. Muysken, "Mixed Codes," in *Handbook of Multilingualism and Multilingual Communication*, ed. P. Auer and L. Wei (Berlin: Mouton De Gruyter, 2007), 321 calls this "alternational code mixing." See the observations of the editors, Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 24–25, 93–94; M. Choat, "Review of Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis, Volume 2, by Iain Gardner, Anthony Alcock, Wolf-Peter Funk," *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* 2016.07.24 (2016); Choat, "Epistolary Formulae in Early Coptic Letters," 671; M. Choat, "Early Coptic Epistolography," in *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt from the Ptolemies to the Abbasids*, ed. A. Papaconstantinou (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 153–78.

115 P.Kellis V Copt. 22. Cf. P.Kellis VII Copt. 118.

116 P.Kellis V Copt. 11, 12, 21, 22, 24, 26, 33, 34, 36, 38, 43, 44 (?), 52, P.Kellis VII Copt. 65, 75, 84, 92, 94, 95, 102, 103, 105, 106, 107, 108, 112, 113, 116. Discussed in Choat, *Belief and Cult*, 26–27; Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 233.

117 ⲙⲉⲗⲉⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛ̣[ⲉⲕ]ⲯⲁⲗⲙⲟⲥ ⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲓⲁⲛⲓⲛ ⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲣⲙ̄ⲛ̄ⲕⲏⲙⲉ ϩⲟⲟⲩ <ⲛⲓⲙ> P.Kellis V Copt. 19.13–14.

118 See the lists of Coptic letters in Choat, "Epistolary Formulae in Early Coptic Letters," 667–78. Note Bagnall's characterization, "it is prudent to suppose that the nonliterary use of Coptic was largely monastic in the fourth century and only gradually acquired a larger public." Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 257 (which was published before the publication of the Kellis documents).

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Conclusions

This chapter started with the idiosyncratic language use of one individual: Orion. His greetings to the "elect and catechumens," and his description of Hor as "the good limb of the Light Mind" stand out from the majority of the Kellis letters, even though he is not alone in his Manichaean repertoire. A small number of letters employed explicit Manichaean self-designators and other religiously marked language. At first glance, these self-designators seem to reveal a sectarian social imaginary, building on conceptual maps found in cosmological and theological texts. They sketch a world in which "fathers" depend on their "daughters," framing relationships with the metaphor of one single family or race, where all are "members" or "limbs" of the Manichaean body. The function of this religiously motivated kinship terminology was performative, and its purpose was primarily to activate an identity within the Manichaean ideology of gift exchange. The elect alluded to expectations about the financial and material support of catechumens in their letters, conveying not only a basic framework for social relations, but also its corresponding obligations. At the same time, this situational usage of marked repertoire was absent in many other letters, including those by Apa Lysimachos and the Teacher.

Some of the designators treat the addressed as people belonging to a distinct category; they are called "children of righteousness," "worthy members," "children of the living race," and part of "the holy church." This sense of privilege or separateness from society was never combined with strong antagonistic language. While these designators may have evoked intense feelings of commonality, as Peter Brown suggests, it is telling that most authors did not use these expressions. In fact, the characterization that Manichaeans' self-understanding was antagonistic, or that they considered themselves a "chosen elite" and "*the* Christians" cannot be confirmed in the actual Kellis letters, where they never employed the self-designators Christian or Christianity, nor used labels like "the holy church" in direct competition with other churches.

The overall picture that emerges from all the self-designators in the documentary papyri is that of a somewhat coherent network of affiliated brothers and sisters. The relations in this network were modeled after – and frequently labelled as – family and kinship relationships, ranging from "brothers" and "mothers" to "those of the neighborhood" and "those of the household." Many of these designators carried an unmarked tone, indicating nothing more than the connectedness and commonality of living under the same roof, with some occasional expansion of meaning to include fellow Manichaeans. The extensive use of Coptic derives from the same setting. Although it stood out from the norm in fourth-century Egypt, it did not correspond one-to-one with an activated Manichaean identity. Most probably, the use of Coptic connoted a

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network of overlapping relations that extended beyond Manichaeans, and included family and village members in addition to religious affiliates. There is no reason to assume that all Coptic letters were exclusively written by, or addressed to, Manichaeans. The emphasized religious designators in Coptic letters, therefore, evoked groupness in *settled* situations that would otherwise continue without explicit self-understanding or group demarcations. Authors pressing for more explicitly articulated group bonds and conceptual maps deviated from the common-sense speech norms of village society. The elect most prominently adapted their speech patterns because their lifestyle *per definition* required a more thorough integration of everyday life and Manichaean group norms. They were in constant need of "those who give rest."

Appendix: List of Self-Designators in the Personal Letters

This list of self-designators is not exhaustive and the references to the Coptic Medinet Madi documents are given as general indications. More parallels can be found easily with the CFM *Dictionary of Manichaean Texts* (*Vol. 1*).

(Self-) designators	Documentary papyri	Parallels in the literary texts from Kellis	Parallels in the Manichaean texts from Medinet Madi
Loved one(s)	P.Kellis V Copt. 14.3–5 (loved one of my soul, gladness of my spirit: [πϣο]γμεϊε ν̄[ταψγχη πογρατ] ν̣̄παπνεγ[μα]). P.Kellis V Copt. 15.1 (Loved one of my soul and my spirit: πμεριτ ν̄ταψγχη̣ μν̄ παπ̣ν̣̄α).[a]	P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 11.11; 12.09,17; 42.05; 44.12,20; 52.01; 54.44,55; 62.20; 71.16 (παμεριτ).	*Often*, See for example Hom. 16.8, 1 Keph. 7.18, 9.24, 42.11, 43.26 etc. 2 PsB. 13.26, 29.20, 42.33, 44.27 etc.

a A similar construction as the inclusion of soul, spirit and heart in the Manichaean prayer formula is used in greeting formulas. The most elaborate is "Before everything: I write greeting my brother, my loved master who is very precious to me, the beloved of my soul, the gladness of my spirit (and) the joy of my heart" (P.Kellis VII Copt. 89). But much more generally used is "the beloved of my soul and my spirit" (P.Kellis V Copt. 14 (the gladness of my spirit) 15, 37, and P.Kellis VII Copt. 90, 105) sometimes shortened to "precious to my spirit," "precious to me," "loved one," "whom I love with all my heart and soul." This is often combined with the notion of his/her memory being "sealed" in their heart (P.Kellis V Copt. 25, 26, 29 all sons addressing Maria, but also used in variations in 17, 19, and P.Kellis VII Copt. 85).

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(*cont.*)

(Self-) designators	Documentary papyri	Parallels in the literary texts from Kellis	Parallels in the Manichaean texts from Medinet Madi
	P.Kellis v Copt. 16.1–3 (loved one who is precious to my spirit and the beloved of all my limbs: [ⲡⲁⲙ]ⲉ̣ⲣ̣ⲓ̣ⲧ̣ [ⲉ]ⲧⲁï ⲛ̄ⲡ̣ⲁ̣ⲡ̣ⲛ̣̄ⲁ̣ ⲁ̣ⲩ̣ⲱ̣ ⲡ̣ⲱ̣ⲟⲩ̣ⲙⲉⲓⲉ̣ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲙ̣ⲉ̣ⲗⲟ̣ⲥ ⲧ̣ⲏ̣ⲣ̣ⲟⲩ). P.Kellis v Copt. 19.1, P.Kellis vii Copt. 61.3 (loved one). P.Kellis v Copt. 20.1 (loved ones who are honored of my soul: ⲛⲁⲙⲉⲣ̣ⲉⲧⲉ [ⲉ]ⲧ̣ⲁïⲁïⲧ ⲛⲧ̣[ⲟⲧ]ⲥ̣ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲯⲩⲭⲏ). P.Kellis v Copt. 25.29–30 (our beloved: ⲛ̄ⲛⲛ̄ⲙⲉⲣⲉⲧⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ). Often: "beloved brother"		
The brotherhood	P.Kellis v Copt. 25.56 (ⲧⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲥⲁⲛ), P.Kellis vii Copt. 70.23.[b]	T.Kellis ii Syr./Copt 2 139–140 P.Kellis vi Copt. 53, 72.02 and 54.61 (ⲧⲛ̄ⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲥⲁⲛ).	1 Keph. 147 338.20–340.19 (on five types of brotherhood).
Kinship terminology	*Often*	*Often*	*Often*

b Although not clear if the author is speaking here of "the" brotherhood or about "our" brotherly relation.

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(*cont.*)

(Self-) designators	Documentary papyri	Parallels in the literary texts from Kellis	Parallels in the Manichaean texts from Medinet Madi
The children of the living race	P.Kellis V Copt. 22.5 (ⲛ̄ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧ̣ⲣⲉⲓ̈ⲧⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲛϩ̣). P.Kellis V Copt. 30.4–5 (Our children who are among our (?) race: ⲛ̄ⲛ̣ⲉⲛϣⲏⲣⲉ̣ ⲉⲧ̣ϩ[ⲛ̄ ⲧⲛ̄] ⲣ̣ⲉⲓ̈ⲧⲉ).	T.Kellis II Syr./Copt. 1.35 (your race). T.Kellis II Syr./Copt. 2.126–7 (Syriac: sons of their race, Coptic: ⲁⲧⲟⲩ̣ⲣⲉⲓ̈ⲧⲉ). P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 82.7.	1 PsB. 154.15 (and reconstructed in Kellis T.Kellis II Copt. 4, B41).[c] 1 Keph. 180.17, the opposite image is used in 1 Keph. 354.6 and 24, and 363.6. Used in the *synaxeis codex* and the *Šābuhragān*.[d] "Race" is frequently used in Coptic Manichaean texts. Other self-designators include "race of light" (1 Keph. 112, 268.5), "race of faith and truth" (1 Keph. 112 268.21) and "only begotten race" (1 Keph. 119 286.5).
Master(s)	In almost all letters combined with "my brother(s)" (ⲡⲁϫⲁⲓ̈ⲥ ⲡⲁⲥⲁⲛ, also attested in Greek.	–	"Masters" is often used for transempirical powers, for example in 1 Keph. 145.23.

c Gardner, *KLT1*, 39.

d ⲣⲉⲓⲧⲉ seems to have had a more intimate familial meaning. In Hom 2.4 it is contrasted with ⲅⲉⲛⲟⲥ, and in 1 Keph. 149, 362.2–6 it is used to divide the elect in five families, only three of which are virtuous. The designator "children of the living race" has been used in Mani's *Epistles* and in the First discourse of Mani's Living Gospel, cited in Gardner, *KLT2*, 83. It also features in some of the Syriac fragments from Egypt, see Pedersen and Larsen, *Manichaean Texts in Syriac*, 204–7. The Šābuhragān is cited at A. Adam, ed., *Texte zum Manichäismus* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1969), 7 "Kinder der lebendigen Familie und der Lichtwelt."

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(*cont.*)

(Self-) designators	Documentary papyri	Parallels in the literary texts from Kellis	Parallels in the Manichaean texts from Medinet Madi
Child of Righteousness	P.Kellis V Copt. 14.5, 15.2, 19.1 (ⲡϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲇⲓⲕⲁⲓⲟⲥⲩⲛⲏ), (19.9 "disciple of righteousness" in a quotation).	–	1 Keph. 96.26–27, Hom. 59.21–22. Righteousness and righteous appears often.
Child, Children	P.Kellis V Copt. 31.4–5 (Children of God: ⲛ̄ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ) P.Kellis VII Copt. 61.3 (my children: ⲛⲁϣⲏⲣⲉ). Often: children (in supposedly actual families, P.Kellis VII Copt. 107 "my good child" in a letter from father to son).	T.Kellis II Copt. 2, B2, 155 ("All thy Children"). P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 32.22, 41.02, 14 (ⲛⲁϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛⲁⲙⲁⲑⲏⲧⲏⲥ), 20 and 42.03, 44.11, 52.20, 62.19 (ⲛⲁϣⲏⲣⲉ).	*often*
Shona	P.Kellis V Copt. 31 ("my *shona*-daughters" ⲛⲁϣⲉⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥϩⲟⲛⲁ). P.Kellis V Copt. 20.50, 44.14 and P.Kellis VII 58.21 (ⲥϩⲟⲛⲁ).	–	–
Daughters of Light Mind	P.Kellis V Copt. 31.3–4 ([ⲛ̄ϣⲉⲣⲉ] ⲙ̣̄ⲡ̣ⲛⲟⲩⲥ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲁïⲛⲉ). For the Light Mind, see P.Kellis V Copt. 15.3–4 ("good limb of the Light Mind").	The Light Mind is also mentioned in T.Kellis II Copt. 2.114.	Both Daughters and Light Mind are relatively common, but never in this combination. See 1 Keph. 37.19 for the "daughters of the Light and truth."

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(*cont.*)

(Self-) designators	Documentary papyri	Parallels in the literary texts from Kellis	Parallels in the Manichaean texts from Medinet Madi
Elect and catechumen	P.Kellis v Copt. 15.28–29; 16.40–41 (ⲛ̄ⲛ̣ⲉ̣ⲕⲗⲉⲕ[ⲧ]ⲟⲥ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ⲕⲁⲑ̣ⲏⲕⲟⲩⲙ̣ⲉ̣ⲛⲟⲥ); 17.52 (catechumens only); 22.61 (catechumens only); 32.2 (catechumen of the faith: ⲧⲕⲁⲑⲏⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲏ ⲙ̄ⲡⲛⲁϩⲧⲉ).	P.Kellis ii Copt. 2 C1,71–2 and C2,105–6 (parallel in Medinet Madi, Coptic: ⲥ̣ⲱ̣ⲧ̣ⲡ̣ [ⲉⲧⲟⲩ]ⲁ̣ⲃ̣ⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛϥⲕ̣[ⲁ]ⲑⲏ̣ⲕ̣ⲟ̣ⲩ̣ⲙⲉⲛⲟ[ⲥ]). P.Kellis vi Copt. 53, 51.5,9; P.Kellis ii Copt. 2. 71–2, 105–106 (ⲛϥⲥ̣[ⲱⲧⲡ] ⲉ̣ⲧ̣ⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ [ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ …] ⲙ̣ⲛ̄ ⲛϥⲕⲁⲑⲏ̣ⲕⲟⲩⲙ̣ⲉⲛ̣[ⲟⲥ]).[e]	1 PsB. 278.3 (and reconstructed in Kellis, P.Kellis ii Copt. 2, text C2, 105–6).[f] Both designators are often used. They are mentioned together, for example, in 2 PsB. 20.2, 21.22, 25.27, 27.14, etc. 1 Keph. 6.22, 10.14, 36.10–11 etc. Hom. 7.2, etc.
They who give rest	P.Kellis v Copt. 15.28, 16.41, 17.53, 35.47, 36.14 and P.Kellis vii Copt. 115.40. (ⲁⲛⲉⲧϯ ⲙ̄ⲧⲁⲛ ⲛⲉⲕ, and variations).	Not as self-designator, but rest is an important concept.	Not as self-designator, but rest is an important concept.
Patronage	P.Kellis v Copt. 31.16ff ("helpers," "worthy patrons" and "firm unbending pillars": ⲉⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲟⲓ̈ ⲛⲉⲛ ⲛ̄ⲃⲟⲏⲑⲟⲥ ϩⲓ ⲡⲁⲧⲣⲟⲛ ⲉϥⲣ̄ϣⲉⲩ· ϩⲓ ⲥⲧⲩⲗⲟⲥ ⲉϥⲧⲁϫⲣⲁⲓ̈ⲧ).	–	1 Keph. 233.24. "Helper" (ⲃⲟⲏⲑⲟⲥ) is used frequently (although often for transempirical beings), for example Hom. 17.20, 1 Keph. 11.11, 15.17, 97.33 etc. 2 Keph. 346.8, 350.9.
God-loving-souls	P.Kellis v Copt. 31.5–6 (The favored, blessed, god-loving: ⲙ̣ⲯ̣[ⲩ]ⲭⲁ̣ⲩⲉ ⲉⲧⲥⲙⲁⲙⲁⲧ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲟⲥ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲓ̈ⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ)	–	–

e P.Kellis v Copt. 51.82 several times speaks about "being chosen" and P.Kellis ii Copt. 2. Text A, 16 has ⲥⲟⲧⲡ reconstructed in a very fragmentary context.

f Gardner, *KLT1*, 71.

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(*cont.*)

(Self-) designators	Documentary papyri	Parallels in the literary texts from Kellis	Parallels in the Manichaean texts from Medinet Madi
A blessed one	P.Kellis v Copt. 35.42 (ⲉϥⲥⲙⲁⲙ[ⲁ]ⲧ)	Blessed is used as adjective, not as self-designator.	Same sentiment, but not as a self-designator. See 1 Keph. 164.1 etc. "blessed are you …" and 166.11 about the "blessed elect" (ⲉⲕⲗⲉⲕⲧⲟⲥ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲟⲥ). Cf. Hom. 75.
The faithful/ believers	–	P.Kellis II Gr. 91.20 (Make us worthy to be your faithful). P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 34.23 (ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲡ̣ⲓ̣ⲥ̣ⲧ̣ⲟ̣ⲥ̣), see "Church of the faithful."	Often, see for example 2 PsB. 28.17, Hom. 25.1, 85.29, 1 Keph. 34.7, 189.19,21,29 etc.
The Pious	P.Kellis I Gr. 63 (Soul of the pious: ψυχικῶν τῆς ε̣ὐ̣σ̣ε̣βο̣ῦ̣ς̣)	-	Not as self-designator, but often as "the holy" (ⲛⲓⲡⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ, 1 Keph.189.21) or "the holy ones" (1 Keph. 213.2).
The righteous	–	P.Kellis VI Gr. 98.96 (Prayer of the Emanations; δικαιούς).	2PsB. 50.18 "Blessed and righteous man." Hom. 14.22, 25.1 ("the righteous and the believers") 38.15 etc. 1 Keph. 36.25, 80.32 etc. Also 2 Keph. 384.6

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(*cont.*)

(Self-) designators	Documentary papyri	Parallels in the literary texts from Kellis	Parallels in the Manichaean texts from Medinet Madi
Tree–Fruit–Blossom (Metaphor)	P.Kellis V Copt. 32.4–5 ("good tree whose fruit never withers": ⲡϣⲏⲛ ⲉⲧⲁⲛⲓⲧ ⲉⲧⲉⲙⲁ ⲡϥ̄ⲕⲁⲣⲡⲟⲥ ϩⲱϭⲙ̄ ⲁⲛⲏϩⲉ). P.Kellis V Copt. 22.4–5 ("the good caretakers," "the fruit of the flourishing tree and the blossoms of love": ⲛ̄ϥⲁïⲣ̣[ⲁ]ⲩϣ ⲉ̣ⲧⲁⲛⲓⲧ … ⲛ̄ⲕⲁⲣ̣ⲡⲟⲥ ⲙ̄ⲡϣⲏⲛ ⲉⲧⲣⲁⲩⲧ ⲛ̄ⲧ̣ⲟⲩⲱ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ).	T.Kellis II Copt. 2, A2, 41 ("Tree of life"). P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 42ff (metaphor of the farmer, growing fruit, giving it to the master). P.Kellis VI Copt. 54.30ff (metaphor of growing a vineyard, cultivating, producing fruits).	*Often*, see for example 1 Keph. 96 on good farmers and bearing fruit.[g]
This Word	P.Kellis V Copt. 25.74 ("everyone who wishes our word": ⲁⲟⲩⲁⲛ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲉϥⲟⲩⲱϣ ⲡⲛ̄ϣⲉϫⲉ). P.Kellis V Copt. 37.19–20 ("Those of this word": ⲁⲛⲁ ⲡⲓⲥⲉϫⲉ).	Not used as self-designator.	"Word(s)" is used often, but not as self-designator.

g L.R.V. Arnold-Döben, *Die Bildersprache des Manichäismus* (Bonn: Religionswissenschaftliches Seminar der Universität Bonn, in Kommission bei Brill, Köln, 1978), 40–44.

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(*cont.*)

(Self-) designators	Documentary papyri	Parallels in the literary texts from Kellis	Parallels in the Manichaean texts from Medinet Madi
Member/limb	P.Kellis v Copt. 31.2–3 and 32.1–2 (The members of the holy church: ⲙ̄ⲙ̣ⲉ̣ⲗ̣ⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗ̣ⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ). P.Kellis v Copt. 34.1 (Worthy member: ⲙ̣ⲉⲗⲟⲥ ⲉⲧⲣ̄ϣⲉⲩ). P.Kellis v Copt. 14.5–6 (joyful limb: ⲡⲙⲉⲗⲟⲥ ⲉ̣ⲧⲧⲁ[ⲗⲏⲗ]); P.Kellis v Copt. 15.3–4 (“good limb of the Light Mind”: ⲡⲙⲉⲗ[ⲟ]ⲥ ⲉⲧⲁⲛⲓⲧ ⲙ̄ⲡⲛⲟ̣ⲩ̣ⲥ ⲛ̄[ⲟⲩ]ⲁ̣ⲓ̈ⲛⲉ); P.Kellis v Copt. 16.2–3 (“beloved of my limbs”: ⲡ̣ϣⲟⲩⲙⲉⲓⲉ̣ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲙ̣ⲉ̣ⲗⲟ̣ⲥ ⲧ̣ⲏ̣ⲣⲟⲩ).	P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 42.8, 11 and 54.7 could have been self-designators, Mani’s limbs). The Light Mind is also mentioned in T.Kellis II Copt. 2.114.	Limb is used often, also as form of address, Mani called his disciples brothers, loved ones and “my limbs” (ⲛⲁⲙⲉⲗⲟⲥ), 1 Keph. 41.25–30, 144.2, 213.3, 285.21. See also Hom. 85.26 (limbs of the church?)
Kingdom of the saints/ holy ones	P.Kellis v Copt. 34.14 ([ⲧⲙ]ⲛ̄ⲧⲣ̄ⲣ̄ⲟ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ). Cf. P.Kellis v Copt. 29.12 “kingdom” and 34.9–10 on the “king.”		Kingdom is often used for the transempirical realms (for example 1 Keph. 13.31, 25.6, 36.25 etc.)

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(*cont.*)

(Self-) designators	Documentary papyri	Parallels in the literary texts from Kellis	Parallels in the Manichaean texts from Medinet Madi
Congregation of the holy ones	–	P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 31.12 (ⲥ̣ⲁⲩϩⲥ ⲛ̄ⲛ̣ⲉ̣ⲧ̣ⲟⲩ̣ⲁ̣ⲃⲉ̣).	Congregation (ⲥⲁⲩϩⲥ) is the general term used for the gathering of the Manichaeans (for example 1 Keph. 77.25, 165.26, 167.1 etc.) Hom 15.20–22 combines several designators; "holy ones," "church," "my lord's assemblies" (ⲁⲛⲥⲁⲩϩⲥ ⲙⲡⲁϫⲁⲓⲥ). 2 PsB. 99.31 mentions the "virtuous assembly of the righteous" (ⲧⲥⲁⲩϩⲥ ⲛ̄ϣⲉⲩ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲇⲓⲕⲁⲓⲟⲥ).
Strangers to the world	Not used, twice strangers (ϣⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲓ) are mentioned in a non-metaphorical way (i.e., foreigners, people you do not know): P.Kellis V Copt. 20.31 and 43.31.	T.Kellis II Copt. 2, A1,15 (ⲛ̄ϣⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲉⲓ ⲁ̣ⲡⲕ̣[ⲟⲥ] ⲙ̣ⲟ̣[ⲥ]).[h] P.Kellis II Copt. 7.15 also refers to a stranger (but in a non-Manichaean context?).	The image of being/becoming a stranger is used often. For example 2 PsB. 175.26.

h Fragmentary context, is it used as designator for others? Gardner, *KLT1*, 10.

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(Self-) designators	Documentary papyri	Parallels in the literary texts from Kellis	Parallels in the Manichaean texts from Medinet Madi
Church	See below "Holy church" and P.Kellis VII Copt. 62.14 and 73.17.	P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 34.01; 51.6,9; 61.7; 71.1; 72.24 (ⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ).	*Often*
		P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 71.01 (protectors (?) of the church, ⲛ̄ⲛⲁϣ[ⲧⲉ] ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ).[i]	
Church of the faithful	–	P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 33.22–23 (ⲛ̄ⲧ̣ⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲛ̣̄ⲛ̣̄ⲡ̣ⲓ̣ⲥ̣ⲧ̣ⲟ̣ⲥ̣)	See above "the faithful."
Holy Church	P.Kellis V Copt. 31.2–3 and 32.1–2 (The members of the holy church: ⲙ̄ⲙ̣ⲉ̣ⲗ̣ⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗ̣ⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ).	P.Kellis VI Gr. 97A,14.	2 PsB. 13.20, 59.18, 160.7, 1 Keph. 20.24, 24.29, 24.32, 25.3, 28.30 etc. (ⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ). See also 2 PsB. 56.24 and 134.19 on Jesus and the Church, 2 PsB. 8.25 and 21.7 on the Paraclete and the Church[j] Church of Mani.[k]

i Suggested reading of a fragmentary passage. Gardner, *KLT2*, 62.
j See notes in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 74.
k Pedersen, "Manichäer in ihrer Umwelt," 251.

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(*cont.*)

(Self-) designators	Documentary papyri	Parallels in the literary texts from Kellis	Parallels in the Manichaean texts from Medinet Madi
Those of the household	Often included in greetings, for example P.Kellis v Copt. 15.33 (greets you and all who are in the house: ⲁⲣⲁⲕ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛⲉⲧϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲏï ⲧⲏ̣ⲣ̣ⲟⲩ); P.Kellis v Copt. 21.27 (all those who are with you); 25.69–74; 28.35 (they who are with you: ⲁ̣ⲛⲉⲧ̣ϩⲁⲧⲏⲧⲛ̄), 29 (from those who are with me); 36.13; 39.4; 40.3; P.Kellis VII Copt. 60.4; 66.33; 83.3; 105.75, etc.[l]	T.Kellis II Copt. 2 140–143 "kingdom of the household" (ⲧⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲣ̄ⲟ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲉⲓ).[m]	1 Keph 38.26, 39.10, 41.30 designators like "the household of the living" or "the kingdom of the household of his people."
Those of the neighborhood	P.Kellis v Copt. 36.40 (ϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲏï ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲛⲉⲧⲣⲁ̣ⲟⲩⲏ); 39.5 (ⲛⲁ̣ⲧ̣ⲣⲁ̣ⲟⲩⲏ); 71.31 (ⲣⲙ-ⲣⲉ̣ⲟⲩⲏⲧⲟⲩ); 77.4 (ⲙⲛ̄ ⲧⲣⲉⲟⲩⲏ); 85.8 and 96.28 (ϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲏï ⲁⲧⲣⲁⲟⲩⲏ̣).		

l Gardner, "Some Comments on Kinship Terms," 136 includes more published and unpublished examples.
m But see notes at Gardner, *KLT1*, 14 most people prefer the easier reading "this one."

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CHAPTER 4

Tehat's Gifts: Everyday Community Boundaries

> You do not give bread to the hungry, from fear of imprisoning in flesh the limb of your God
>
> AUGUSTINE, *Faust* 15.7

A continuous stream of donations, gifts, and semicommercial interactions provide the backdrop to most of the personal letters and business accounts from Kellis. Requests for material support, grumpy complaints about lost commodities, and detailed instructions for financial transactions permeate the letters, making them a rich source of information on the social relations and transactions of an Egyptian village economy. We find short snippets on the textile industry and indications of patronage relationships, but most often, the letters inform us about the inner workings of household economies. Geographically dispersed families, like those of Makarios and Pamour, had to depend on long-distance messages to request particular goods to be sent, sold, or given away. They called on next of kin, neighbors, patrons, and wider communities in times of need, thereby identifying *informal networks of care*.[1]

Manichaean almsgiving took place within this diverse economy. Despite the strong Manichaean ideology of gift-giving, believed to liberate the Living Soul from its prison in the material world, the local situation asked for a less articulate engagement with the elect. While the elect initiated written contact and employed Manichaean language and metaphors in their fundraising letters, the response from catechumens was almost invisible. Take for example Tehat's letter to her son, urging him to "have pity for them and you set up (?)

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1 P. Horden, "Household Care and Informal Networks. Comparisons and Continuities from Antiquity to the Present," in *The Locus of Care: Families, Communities, Institutions, and the Provision of Welfare since Antiquity*, ed. P. Horden and R. Smith (London: Taylor and Francis, 1997), 39. Sections of this chapter have been published as M. Brand, "'You Being for Us Helpers, and Worthy Patrons …' (P.Kell.Copt 31): Manichaean Gift-Exchange in the Village of Kellis," in *Women in Western and Eastern Manichaeism*, ed. M. Scopello (Leiden: Brill, 2022), 101–116.

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some pots for them; for they have father nor mother."[2] Is she addressing almsgiving or charitable giving? Are the "pots" (or "things," ϩⲛⲟ) prepared for the elect or for impoverished neighbors? This chapter will place Manichaean alms gifts among four other types of giving, re-examining the role of almsgiving, and identifying how the geographical distance affected the relationship between elect and catechumens in Kellis.

There are two reasons to inspect the practice of gift giving. The first is based on social-scientific research that connects group-formation and gift-exchange. Various social psychological and anthropological studies suggest that gifts reveals – as well as impose – identities on the giver and recipient. It is a "way of free associating about the recipient in his presence," as it reveals "the idea which the recipient evokes in the imagination of the giver."[3] To give alms was to perform Manichaeanness, especially if this took place in semipublic settings that allowed members of the community to recognize almsgivers as one of their own. Since late antique religious associations were often maintained through communal fundraising between people of various social-economic status – frequently framed in terms of almsgiving and charity – we should examine gift-giving patterns to detect similar strategies among Manichaeans.[4] The second reason to focus on these interactions is Augustine's claim that Manichaeans only gave goods to fellow-Manichaeans, since they equated charity to beggars with the murder of the Living Soul. If this is true, it signifies an important boundary between insiders and outsiders, Manichaeans and Christians. The Kellis material offers an opportunity to re-examine such heresiological and doctrinal positions from the perspective of lived religious practice and ask if giving indeed demarcated belonging.

2 P.Kellis V Copt. 43.16–19 (the Coptic text is cited and discussed below).

3 B. Schwartz, "The Social Psychology of the Gift," *American Journal of Sociology* 73, no. 1 (1967): 2; M. Hénaff, "Ceremonial Gift-Giving: The Lessons of Anthropology from Mauss and Beyond," in *The Gift in Antiquity*, ed. M.L. Satlow (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2013), 16; I.F. Silber, "Beyond Purity and Danger: Gift-Giving in the Monotheistic Religions," in *Gifts and Interests*, ed. A. Vandevelde (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 115–32; I.F. Silber, "Echoes of Sacrifice? Repertoires of Giving in the Great Religions," in *Sacrifice in Religious Experience*, ed. A.I. Baumgarten (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 291–312. Further studies on the ancient world are included in M.L. Satlow, ed., *The Gift in Antiquity* (Chichester: John Wiley & Son, 2013).

4 R. Last and P.A. Harland, *Group Survival in the Ancient Mediterranean* (London: T&T Clark, 2020).

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The Manichaean Ideology of Giving

Manichaean theological and liturgical texts describe the interaction between elect and catechumens as centered around gift-exchange. The ascetic lifestyle of Manichaean elect was sustained by the gifts of catechumens, who received spiritual benefits in return. In the *Kephalaia*, giving is the first task of the catechumenate, alongside prayer and fasting (1 Keph. 80). Gifts to the elect have to be given "in righteousness" (ϩⲛ̄ ⲇⲓⲕⲁⲓⲟⲥ[ⲩⲛⲏ]) so that the "catechumen who does this will be in partnership with them."[5] The elect, often portrayed as strangers and wanderers, were to embrace voluntary poverty, as one of their psalms urges them:

> let us love poverty and be poor in the body but rich in the spirit. And let us be like the poor, making many rich, as having nothing, yet possessing power over the universe. What shall we do with gold and silver? Let us love God: his light is the power, his sage wisdom.[6]

In one of Mani's *Epistles* found in Kellis (P.Kellis VI Copt. 53), the Manichaean community is redefined in terms of voluntary poverty, which distinguishes them from all the other religious communities of the world. The author (Mani?) writes: "[Y]ou have become people made better by blessed poverty,"[7] and

> you are obliged the more now to perfect the blessing of poverty, by which you will gain the victory over the sects and the world. It is profitable for you to perfect it and be vigilant in it, because (poverty) is your glory, the crown of your victory.[8]

This emphasis on poverty as a sign of belonging is translated into the pressing commandment for the elect to strip themselves of the world (P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 82.12).[9] The opposition between earthly wealth and the love of God

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5 ⲉⲣⲉ ⲡⲓⲕⲁⲧⲏⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ ⲉⲧⲙ̄ⲙⲉⲩ ⲉⲧ̣[.....] ⲛⲁⲕⲟⲓⲛⲱⲛⲏ ⲛⲉⲙⲉⲩ 1 Keph. 80, 193.10–11.

6 ⲛ̄ⲧⲛ̄ⲙⲉⲣⲉ ⲧⲙⲛ̄ⲧϩⲏⲕⲉ ⲧⲛ̄ⲣ̄[ϩ]ⲏ̣ⲕⲉ ϩⲛ̄ⲡⲥⲱⲙⲁ ⲣⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲟ ϩⲱϥ ϩⲛ̄ⲡⲡ̄ⲛ̄ⲁ̄ ⲧⲛ̄ⲣ̄ⲧϩⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲓϩⲏⲕⲉ ⲉⲛⲉⲓⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲙⲏϣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲣⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲟ ϩⲱ̣ⲥ̣ ⲉⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲛ ⲗⲁⲩⲉ ⲉⲛⲉⲙⲁϩⲧⲉ ⲁϫⲛ̄ⲡⲧⲏⲣϥ̄ [ⲉ]ⲛⲁⲣⲉⲩ ⲛ̄ⲛⲟⲩⲃ ϩⲓϩⲉⲧ· ⲙⲁⲣⲛ̄ⲙⲉⲣⲓ ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ· ⲡⲉϥⲟⲩⲁⲓ̈ⲛⲉ ⲧⲉ ⲧϭ̣ⲁ̣ⲙ ⲧⲉϥⲥⲟⲫⲓⲁ ⲛ̄ⲣⲙ̄ⲛ̄ϩⲏ[ⲧ] 2 PsB. 157.5–10 (modified translation, Allberry translates "possessing power over everything").

7 ϩⲁⲧⲛ̄ ϣⲱⲡⲉ ⲛ̄ϩⲛ̄ⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲉⲩⲁⲛⲓⲧ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧⲙⲛ̄ⲧ̀ ϩⲏⲕⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲟⲥ P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 51.6–8.

8 ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲏⲡ̀ ⲛ̄ϩⲟⲩⲟ ⲁϫⲱⲕ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ϯⲛⲟⲩ ⲙ̄ⲡⲙⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲥⲙⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲙⲛ̄ⲧ̀ ϩⲏⲕⲉ ⲧⲉⲓ̈ ⲉⲧ̣ⲉⲧⲛⲁⲧϭⲣⲟ̀ ⲛ̄ϩⲏⲧⲥ̀ ⲁⲛⲇⲟⲅⲙⲁ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲕⲟⲥⲙⲟⲥ: ⲥⲣ̀ⲛⲁϥⲣⲉ ⲛⲏⲧⲛ̄ ⲁϫⲁⲕⲥ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲣⲁⲓ̈ⲥ ⲉⲣⲱⲧⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ϩⲏⲧⲥ̀: ⲉⲡⲓⲇⲏ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲥ ⲡⲉ ⲡⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲉⲁⲩ ⲡⲕⲗⲁⲙ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲧϭⲣⲟ P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 51.11–17.

9 The Manichaean *Psalmbook* from Medinet Madi contains many songs praising poverty and including it as one of the honors of the Paraclete (2 PsB. 33.22). In the Psalms of Herakleides,

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is further explored in another psalm, a version of which was found in Kellis. The psalmist appropriates a biblical parable when he exhorts the catechumens not to "acquire treasure for yourselves upon the earth, the place of moths and thieves."[10] Evoking the same biblical parable, one of the elect praises the catechumen Eirene because she acquired "for herself her riches and stored them in the treasuries that are in the heights, where moths shall not find a way, nor shall thieves dig through to them to steal; which (storehouses) are the sun and the moon."[11] In contrast to the elect, for whom acquiring riches would be a major transgression, Eirene is praised for her wealth, showing that rhetoric usually associated with voluntary poverty was appropriated and applied to the framework of gift-giving.

In return for their gifts, catechumens were promised release from the cycle of transmigration (1 Keph. 91 and 127).[12] In fact, the *Kephalaia* states that alms gift "becomes an intercessor (ⲟⲩⲣⲉϥⲥⲁⲡⲥⲡ) for you and causes you to be forgiven a multitude of faults."[13] The *Psalmbook* also speaks of alms as chariots or horses, bringing salvation in full speed (2 PsB. 111.25). The daily Manichaean prayers also reflect this reciprocity in the final stanza, where "the righteous"[14] are praised for having overcome all evil. In return for worship and glorification, catechumens praying the prayers express the expectation of transempirical blessing through the intercession of the elect in the form of release from the chains and torment of reincarnation (P.Kellis VI Gr. 98. 106–123).[15]

poverty is one of the virtues summed up by the soul, as embraced and received in the process of rejecting sin (2 PsB. 97.31). In Kellis, we find this theme in T.Kellis II Copt. 2, 98.29. This approach to asceticism is found more widely in Late Antiquity, see D. Caner, *Wandering, Begging Monks: Spiritual Authority and the Promotion of Monasticism in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 75–8 and 120–1.

10 ..ⲙⲡ]ⲱ̣ⲣϫⲡⲟ ⲉϩⲟ ⲛⲏⲧⲛ̄ ϩⲓϫⲛ̄ ⲡⲕⲁϩ ⲡⲙⲁ̣ ⲛ̄ⲧϩⲁ[ⲗⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛ̣̄]ⲣⲉϥϫⲓ̈ⲟⲩⲉ 1 PsB. 68, 98.22–23 = T.Kellis II Copt. 2 A2.44ff.

11 ⲧⲉⲧⲁⲥ [ϫ]ⲡ̣ⲟ ⲛⲉⲥ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲥⲭⲣⲏⲙⲁ [ⲁⲥ]ϭⲁⲗⲱⲟⲩ ⲁ̣ⲛⲉϩⲱⲣ ⲉⲧ̣ϩ̣ⲓ [ⲡ]ϫ̣[ⲓ]ⲥ̣ⲉ ⲉⲧⲉ ⲙⲁⲣⲉ ϩⲁⲗⲉ ϭⲛ̄ ⲙ̣ⲁⲓ̈ⲧ· ⲟⲩⲇⲉ ⲙⲁⲣⲉ ⲗ̣ⲏ̣ⲥⲧⲏⲥ [ϫ]ⲁϫⲧ̀ ⲁⲣⲁⲩ ⲁϫⲓⲟⲩⲉ; ⲉⲧⲉ ⲛ̄[ⲧⲁ]ⲩ̣ ⲛⲉ ⲡⲣⲏ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲟϩ· P.Kellis V Copt. 32.7–13.

12 BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 198–9.

13 ⲱ[ⲁ]ⲥⲣ̄ⲟⲩⲣⲉϥⲥⲁⲡⲥⲡ ϩⲁⲣⲱⲧⲛ ⲛⲥⲧⲣⲟⲩⲕⲱ ⲛⲏ[ⲧⲛ ⲁ]ⲃⲁ̣ⲗ ⲛⲟⲩⲙⲏⲏϣⲉ ⲛϫⲣⲁⲡ 1 Keph. 93, 238.27–28 (translation modified).

14 Most probably to be interpreted as the Manichaean elect, πάντας δικαίους P.Kellis VI Gr. 98.95–6. On the use of this terminology, see F. Bermejo-Rubio, "'I Worship and Glorify': Manichaean Liturgy and Piety in Kellis' Prayer of the Emanations," in *Practicing Gnosis*, ed. A.D. DeConick, G. Shaw, and J.D. Turner (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 253–4.

15 I. Gardner, "Manichaean Ritual Practice at Ancient Kellis: A New Understanding of the Meaning and Function of the So-Called *Prayer of the Emanations*," in *'In Search of Truth': Augustine, Manichaeism and Other Gnosticism; Studies for Johannes van Oort at Sixty*, ed. J.A. van den Berg, et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 253n16 referring to 1 Keph. 115.

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In Manichaeism, more than in Christianity, the obligation to give was motivated by a complex belief system about the cosmos, gnosis, and the role of the purified human body. The *Kephalaia* explicitly states that almsgiving leads to the rescue of the Living Soul that "is entangled and bound in the entire universe," which it says "shall be freed and cleansed and purified and redeemed" on account of almsgivers.[16] The fasting of the elect leads to the purification of their bodies, which could then filter the Living Soul from food. The soul "comes into him [the elect] *daily* in the metabolism of his food, becomes pristine, and is purified, separated, and cleansed from the mixture with the Darkness that is mixed with it."[17] This liberation was achieved through a daily ritual meal, which Peter Brown describes as "an exceptionally high-pitched version of the spiritual exchange between its leaders and the rank and file."[18] Manichaean texts understood this spiritual exchange as a *daily* obligation: "[H]is alms that he gives on every day of the year."[19] Freed from their material prison, the transempirical sparks of Light ascended into the world of Light on a daily basis.[20]

Manichaean liturgical and theological texts sketch two scenario's for where and how food alms were to be given. In one scenario, the elect were expected to beg for alms, following Mani's example, who was portrayed in the CMC as abstaining from the vegetables of his Baptist community until they were given to him as a donation (CMC 9.1, 142.3–13, this model is implied in the descriptions in 1 Keph 150). Some sections of the *Kephalaia*, additionally, are very negative about elect who depart from the company of their brothers and eat and drink alone.[21] Instead, Manichaean elect should celebrate a ritual meal together after

16 ⲛ̄ⲧⲯⲩⲭⲏ ⲉⲧⲁⲛϩ ⲧⲉⲧϫⲁⲗϫ ⲉⲧⲙⲏⲣ ϩ[ⲙ ⲡⲕⲟ]ⲥⲙⲟ̣ⲥ̣ ⲧⲏⲣϥ̄ ⲉⲡⲉⲓⲇⲏ ϣⲁⲥⲃⲱⲗ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲛ̄ⲥⲕⲁⲑ[ⲁⲣⲓⲍⲉ] ⲛⲥⲧⲟ̣ⲩ̣ⲃ[ⲟ] ⲛ̄ⲥⲥⲱⲧⲉ ⲛ̣ⲧ̣ⲉ̣ϥⲗⲁⲓ̈ϭⲉ 1 Keph. 115, 277.8–10 (modified translation).

17 ϯⲯⲩⲭⲏ ⲉⲧⲛⲏⲩ ⲁϩⲟⲩⲛ [ⲁⲣ]ⲁϥ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧⲟⲓⲕ[ⲟⲛⲟ]ⲙⲓⲁ ⲛⲧϥⲧⲣⲟⲫⲏ ⲙ̄ⲙⲏⲛⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙⲏⲛⲉ ϣⲁⲥⲧⲟⲩⲃⲟ ⲛⲥ[ⲕⲁ]ⲑⲁⲣⲓⲍⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥⲥⲱⲧϥ̄ ⲛ̄ⲥ[ⲉⲓⲱ]ⲉ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲛ̄ⲧⲥⲩⲅⲕⲣⲁⲥⲓⲥ [ⲙ]ⲡⲕⲉⲕⲉ ⲉⲧⲙⲁϫⲧ̄ ⲁϩⲟⲩⲛ ⲛⲉⲙⲉ̣ⲥ̣ 1 Keph. 79, 191.16–19. See the interpretation in BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 169–79.

18 Brown, *Treasure in Heaven*, 38. Cf. J.J. Buckley, "Tools and Tasks: Elchasaite and Manichaean Purification Rituals," *The Journal of Religion* 66, no. 4 (1986): 399–411.

19 ⲧⲉϥⲙⲛⲧⲛ̣[ⲁⲉ ⲉⲧϥ]ϯ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲥ ϩ[ⲛ̄] ⲛ̄ϩⲟⲟⲩⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲛⲧⲣⲁⲙⲡⲉ 1 Keph. 91, 233.15–16. Cf. 1 Keph. 79, 191.29, 32 and 81 194.8.

20 The daily ascent of Light is related to the waxing moon, which was believed to contain all the liberated Light. See 1 Keph. 65, 69, and 122. G. Kosa, "The Manichaean Attitude to Natural Phenomena as Reflected in the Berlin Kephalaia," *Open Theology* 1 (2015): 258–9. It is important to note the parallels not only with the Christian tradition(s) but with Zoroastrianism, in which the *yasna* is still the most important ritual meal. BeDuhn, "Eucharist or Yasna?," 14–36; A. Hultgård, "Ritual Community Meals in Ancient Iranian Religion," in *Zoroastrian Rituals in Context*, ed. M. Stausberg (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 367–88.

21 1 Keph. 38 98.20 about "a solitary man," using the designator ⲣ̄ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲱⲧ (also in Hom. 92.2), which was used more widely in fourth, and fifth-century polemic against a "third type"

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catechumens carry the alms gifts to the "table" (e.g. Hom. 28.10–12).[22] One of the psalms explains that Manichaeans, just like Christians, carried their gifts into communal gatherings: "when thou comest in with thy gift to set it on the altar, be reconciled with thy adversary that thy gift may be received from thee."[23] Likewise, 1 Keph 81 places the fasting of the elect in a communal setting in which fifty elect gathered together. Liturgical gatherings involving almsgiving, communal singing, and ritual meals for the elect are frequently described in polemical accounts and Middle Persian, Parthian, and Chinese Manichaean sources, which include a liturgical stage directory for ceremonial processions in which alms were brought in (see chapter 5 on Manichaean liturgical gatherings in Egypt).[24]

Manichaean catechumens were encouraged not only to give food alms, but also to invest all they had in the church. This included the donation of a child or enslaved person to the service of the church and the construction of a house (ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲙⲁⲛ̄ϣⲱⲡⲉ) or place (ⲟⲩⲧⲟ̣[ⲡⲟⲥ]) for church gatherings, "so they can become for him a portion of alms in the holy church."[25] In Parthian and Middle Persian texts, these gifts are called "soul work," (*rw'ng'n*) which refers to all obligatory services. Obligatory services included annual gifts of clothing, which may explain why one of the Coptic psalms includes the claim to

of asceticism. W.P. Funk, "Noch einmal zu *Remnuoth*," in *Liber amicorum Jürgen Horn zum Dank*, ed. A. Giewekemeyer, G. Moers, and K. Widmaier (Göttingen: Seminar für Ägyptologie und Koptologie der Universität, 2009), 35–45; M. Choat, "The Development and Usage of Terms for 'Monk' in Late Antique Egypt," *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 45 (2002): 17.

22 BeDuhn, *The Manichaean Body*, 126–143. In 1 Keph 85, 213.5–14, the elect are urged to eat mindfully in the presence of (?) the catechumens, who "gather[ed] it in, bringing it to the church" (212.11–12).

23 ⲉⲕⲛⲏⲩ ⲁϩⲟⲩⲛ ⲙⲛ̄ⲡⲉⲕⲇⲱⲣⲟⲛ ⲁⲧⲉϥ ⲁⲡⲑⲩⲥⲓⲁⲥⲧⲏⲣⲓ̣ⲟ̣ⲛ̣ ϩⲱⲧⲡ̄ ⲙⲛ̄ⲡⲉⲕⲁⲛⲧⲓⲇⲓⲕⲟⲥ ϫⲉⲩⲛⲁϫⲓ ⲡⲉⲕⲇⲱⲣⲟⲛ [ⲛⲧⲟ]ⲟⲧⲕ 2 PsB. 239, 39.29–30. Compare the references to Early Christian alms boxes in church and the gifts brought forward after the Eucharist, discussed in R. Finn, *Almsgiving in the Later Roman Empire: Christian Promotion and Practice (313–450)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 41–47.

24 W. Sundermann, "A Manichaean Liturgical Instruction on the Act of Almsgiving," in *The Light and the Darkness: Studies in Manichaeism and Its World*, ed. P.A. Mirecki and J.D. BeDuhn (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 204. In the eight-century Chinese *Compendium*, the elect are urged to wait in the monastery until the alms were brought in. S.N.C. Lieu, "Precept and Practice in Manichaean Monasticism," *Journal of Theological Studies* 32, no. 1 (1981): 162.

25 … ⲧⲁⲣⲟⲩⲉ̣ϩ̣ϥ ⲁⲣⲁϥ ⲁⲩⲧⲁⲓ̈ⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙⲛⲧⲛⲁⲉ [ϩ]ⲛ̄ ⲧ[ⲉ]ⲕⲕ[ⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ] ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃ[ⲉ] 1 Keph. 80, 193.13–14.

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have "clothed the orphans."[26] Catechumens who wished to be perfect in order to reach salvation without transmigration were urged to devote all their time and property to the holy church (1 Keph. 91, 229.4–10). In these instances, the logic is less focused on the salvation of the Living Soul, and more on providing aid to those who were capable of setting the process of salvation in motion: even inedible alms gave rest and contributed to the eternal life of the donor (1 Keph. 158, 397.12–22). In keeping with the notion that gifts are a "way of dramatizing group boundaries," Manichaean texts criticize certain forms of almsgiving.[27] Food gifts of fish or meat were considered improper and undesirable; drunken behavior could pollute a gift. With such instructions to guide them, catechumens gave unpolluted alms, in strong contrast with almsgivers who gave to the "teachers of sin" in the world (ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲥⲁϩ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲛⲟⲙⲓⲁ 1 Keph. 144, 348.1).[28] Giving the right commodities at the correct time to a very particular group of people under specific circumstances defined what it meant to be Manichaean.

Five Types of Giving in the Kellis Letters

Gifts, commercial exchange, and the transportation of commodities from the Nile valley to the oasis are practices that appear frequently in the papyri. They can be divided into five overlapping categories: (1) gifts to the elect, (2) economic interaction, (3) household support structures, (4) charity, and (5) patronage.

26 ⲁϊϯ ϩⲓⲱⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲕⲟⲣⲫⲁⲛⲟⲥ 2 PsB. 175.22. cf. 1 Keph. 158 about clothing. Sundermann, "A Manichaean Liturgical Instruction," 206 with references. See also BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 135n59 and a similar reference to yearly clothing gifts in the Chinese hymnbook (strophe 260d).

27 Schwartz, "The Social Psychology of the Gift," 10. The *Kephalaia*, for example, dismissed the Christian Eucharist (ⲧ̣ⲉⲧⲛ̣̄ⲉⲩ̣ⲭⲁ̣ⲣⲓⲥⲧⲉⲓⲁ̣ "your Eucharist," 1 Keph. 130, 308.21) in favor of the Manichaean holy meal. Pedersen, "Holy Meals," 1267–97.

28 1 Keph. 87 discusses alms gifts also in contrast with the gifts given in other religious communities, 1 Keph. 166 deals with a presbyter who kept alms for himself, 1 Keph. 144, 346.28–29 on fish and drunkenness, 1 Keph. 144, 347.21–24 lists further unclean ingredients as eggs, cheese, and poultry. Judgment is ready, moreover, for "the one who takes as much *punya*-food as a grain of mustard and is not able to redeem it." M6020, cited in J.D. BeDuhn, "Digesting the Sacrifices: Ritual Internalization in Jewish, Hindu, and Manichaean Traditions," in *Religion and Identity in South Asia and Beyond: Essays in Honor of Patrick Olivelle*, ed. S. Lindquist (London: Anthem, 2011), 314.

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Gifts to the Elect

Manichaean almsgiving *in practice* was defined by long desert journeys and prolonged periods of absence. The elect lived itinerant lives, traveling in the Nile valley and occasionally visiting the oasis. Through their letters, they appealed to the goodwill of their support network in the oasis. How the inhabitants of Kellis responded to such requests is not always clear, as none of the other letters explicitly refers to almsgiving. Despite such absence of evidence, scholars have tied various passages to the elects' requests, identifying how business owners, such as Tehat, invested part of the money they earned with textile manufacturing and trade in their religious duties toward the elect.[29]

Manichaeans in Kellis were familiar with the expectations regarding almsgiving. The authors of P.Kellis V Copt. 31 and 32 used explicit and elaborate Manichaean phrases to introduce and frame their requests for material support from anonymous daughters, thereby showcasing how deeply some Manichaeans integrated their ideology into daily life. Stressing their dependence, they write, "[Y]ou being for us helpers, and worthy patrons and firm unbending pillars, while we ourselves rely upon you," saying, "therefore I beg you, my blessed daughters, that you will send me two *choes* of oil. For you know yourself that we are in need here since we are afflicted."[30] The designator used indicates that wealthy female catechumens in the oasis were the primary audience of the letter. Although two *choes* of oil was not much (about 6.5 liters), it may have been requested on behalf of a larger retinue, and similar requests were probably made often.[31] Since the anonymous address of P.Kellis V Copt. 31 suggests that it was used as a circular letter, the authors may have amassed the requested commodities into a stockpile of wheat and oil.

While some of the elect solicited alms from a distance, there were direct and personal connections with Kellis. Eirene, the recipient of P.Kellis V Copt. 32, was ordered by a "father" to "do the work and mix the warp until I come,"[32]

29 M. Franzmann, "Tehat the Weaver: Women's Experience in Manichaeism in Fourth-Century Roman Kellis," *Australian Religion Studies Review* 20, no. 1 (2007): 23. Other fragmentary passages have also been surmised as related to Manichaean alms gifts. Among other studies, I note here the interpretation P.Kellis V Copt. 20 as revealing the complex and haphazard nature of almsgiving. Baker-Brian, "Mass and Elite," 177.

30 ⲉⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲟⲓ̈ ⲛⲉⲛ ⲛ̄ⲃⲟⲏⲑⲟⲥ ϩⲓ ⲡⲁⲧⲣⲟⲛ ⲉϥⲣ̄ϣⲉⲩ· ϩⲓ ⲥⲧⲩⲗⲟⲥ ⲉϥⲧⲁϫⲣⲁⲓ̈ⲧ̀ ⲛ̄ⲁⲧⲣⲓⲕⲉ· and [ϯⲣ̄ⲁ]ⲝ̣ⲓⲟⲩ ϭⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙⲱⲧⲛ̄ ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ [ⲛⲁϣⲉⲣⲉ] ⲉⲧⲥⲙⲁⲙⲁⲧ̀· ϫⲉ ⲉⲣⲉⲧⲛⲁ[ⲧⲛⲛⲁⲩ] ⲕ̣ⲟⲩⲥ̣ ⲥ̣ⲛⲉⲩ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ⲛ̄ⲛⲏϩ· ϫⲉ [ⲧⲉⲧⲛⲥⲁ]ⲩ̣ⲛⲉ ϩⲱⲧ̀ⲧⲏⲛⲉ· ϫⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲣ̄[ⲭⲣⲉⲓⲁ] ⲛ̄ⲛⲓⲙⲁ· ⲉⲡⲓⲇⲏ ⲧⲛ̄[ⲗ]ⲁϫϩ̄ P.Kellis V Copt. 31.16–18, 29–33.

31 Bagnall, *KAB*, 49.

32 ⲁⲣⲓ ⲡϩⲱⲃ ⲧ̣ⲉⲙⲟⲩϫⲧ ⲡϣ̣ϯ̣ⲧ̣ ϣⲁϯⲉⲓ· P.Kellis V Copt. 32.31–33. Gardner suggests that Theognostos may have been the author of P.Kellis V Copt. 32 and 33, but admits the lack of firm evidence. The other letters by Theognostos (from a second volume of documentary

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suggesting that she – just like Tehat – produced garments of various sorts. The letter urges her to continue her work for financial reasons, or to produce clothing for the elect until he would come to visit her.[33] Manichaean phrasing and allusions to biblical texts support the latter interpretation – that the letter writer was soliciting alms. The instruction to "do the work" (ⲁⲣⲓ ⲡϩⲱⲃ) is reiterated as "fight in every way to complete the work."[34] The author reinforced the urgency of this task by alluding to the biblical parable of the thief who could come at any hour "to dig through the house." In the original biblical narrative, the lack of knowledge about the hour a thief could come is equated with the lack of knowledge about the date of the arrival of the kingdom of God (Matt 24:42–44 and 1 Thess 5.2). Just like a homeowner needs to be prepared for burglary, a faithful catechumen should be prepared for the kingdom of God. In Eirene's case, mixing the warp and sending wheat and oil was her preparation for the coming of the kingdom. Other Manichaean phrases in this letter connect a biblical passage about treasures in heaven (Matt 6:19–20) with the notion that the sun and moon are storehouses of such treasures. The author describes Eirene as, "[S]he who has acquired for herself her riches and stored them in the treasuries that are in the heights, where moths shall not find a way, nor shall thieves dig through to them to steal; which (storehouses) are the sun and the moon."[35] In Manichaean cosmology, the sun and the moon are ships that take the released Light from the Living Soul and gather it before its final ascent. By creatively mixing the biblical passage with Manichaean cosmology, the letter combines different concepts about gifts into one plea for faithful and good stewardship.[36]

Whether or not the elect specifically solicited alms in these two letters, there are various indications of a more economic nature of the interactions between elect and catechumens. The author of the letter to Eirene writes that they will

papyri) do not immediately confirm his reconstruction, although the handwriting of P.Kellis VII Copt. 84 is similar. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 136.

33 Franzmann, "Tehat the Weaver," 24. The active role of women in the oasis and the religious community is discussed more broadly in M. Franzmann, "The Manichaean Women in the Greek and Coptic Letters from Kellis," in *Women in Western and Eastern Manichaeism*, ed. M. Scopello (Leiden: Brill, 2022), 83–100.

34 First in line 29–30: "fight in every way" (ⲙⲓϣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥⲙⲁⲧ ⲛⲓⲙ) and later on: "flight in every way to complete the work" ⲙⲟⲛⲟⲛ ⲙⲓϣⲉ ⲛ̄ϩⲉ ⲛⲓⲙ· ⲁϫⲱⲕ ⲡϩⲱⲃ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ P.Kellis V Copt. 32.40–42.

35 ⲧⲉⲧⲁⲥ[ϫ]ⲡ̣ⲟ ⲛⲉⲥ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲥⲭⲣⲏⲙⲁ [ⲁⲥ]ϭⲁⲗⲱⲟⲩ ⲁ̣ⲛⲉϩⲱⲣ ⲉⲧ̣ϩ̣ⲓ [ⲡ]ϫ̣[ⲓ]ⲭ̣ⲉ ⲉⲧⲉ ⲙⲁⲣⲉ ϩⲁⲗⲉ ϭⲛ̄ ⲙ̣ⲁⲓ̈ⲧ· ⲟⲩⲇⲉ ⲙⲁⲣⲉ ⲗ̣ⲏ̣ⲥⲧⲏⲥ [ϫ]ⲁϫⲧ̀ ⲁⲣⲁⲩ ⲁϫⲓⲟⲩⲉ ⲉⲧⲉ ⲛ̄[ⲧⲁ]ⲩ̣ ⲛⲉ ⲡⲣⲏ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲟϩ· P.Kellis V Copt. 32.7–13.

36 Franzmann, "An 'Heretical' Use of the New Testament," 155; Franzmann, "The Treasure of the Manichaean Spiritual Life," 235–42.

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meet again. On this occasion, he will "settle our account" (ϣⲁⲧⲛ̄ⲣ̄ⲁⲡⲁⲛⲧⲁ ⲁⲛⲉⲛⲉⲣⲏⲩ ⲧⲛ̄ϯ ⲡ̣ⲛ̣̄ⲱⲡ).[37] How this settlement will be achieved is not clear; it seems unlikely that the elect would have had to pay anything if the commodities were given as alms. Could it be that Eirene and the elect shared in a common venture to produce textiles, much like other fourth-century Egyptian ascetics?[38] The third letter the elect wrote to inhabitants of Kellis is too fragmentary to fully understand, but it might bolster an additional economic interpretation (P.Kellis V Copt. 34). The letter writer may have identified himself as a "father," writing to his "beloved son."[39] Introduced with the religiously marked phrase "worthy member" and including a reference to the "kingdom of the saints," the letter discusses the gift of a tunic, a purchase order (for a book?), and the "service of God," to be accomplished when the recipient's son has finished his current scribal work.[40] While the details escape us, it is noteworthy that the author praises the recipient for his piety, and alludes to financial or spiritual payment: "[…] do it and he pays (?) […] at the end."[41] Is it possible that these interactions diverged from the classical sense of Manichaean almsgiving in a blend of almsgiving and manual labor?

A fourth letter may have been drafted in connection with gift-giving, as it contains strong similarities with P.Kellis V Copt. 31 and 32. While, in contrast to these two letters, P.Kellis I Gr. 63 addresses two men in Greek, it shows all the characteristics of a fundraising letter.[42] The (anonymous) author praises the addressees, Pausanias and Pisistratos, for their good reputations and pious

37 Crum, *CD*. 527b. ϯ ⲱⲡ, "to give account."

38 Struggles with financial interactions are also attested in a letter to Pshai (P.Kellis VII Copt. 70). Financial details are discussed with the head of the household (P.Kellis VII Copt. 82). Other instances mention payment include: for a cloak, paid in terms ("little by little," P.Kellis VII Copt. 94), or for the repairs of a *collarium* (P.Kellis VII Copt. 103), and see also the financial details in P.Kellis VII Copt. 81, 94 and 95.

39 The reading of the Greek address is uncertain, either πατήρ]τατη are possible. Likewise, the "son" in line 9 is mostly reconstructed. … [ⲡⲁϣⲏ]ⲣ̣ⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙⲉⲣⲓⲧ P.Kellis V Copt. 34.9.

40 …..]ⲙⲉⲗⲟⲥ ⲉⲧⲣ̄ϣⲉⲩ ⲛ̄[…..] and ⲧⲇⲓⲁⲕⲟⲛⲓⲁ ⲙ̄ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲩⲧⲉⲥ ⲁⲧⲟⲧⲕ̀ ϩⲛ̄ ⲟ̣[ⲩ̣ …… ⲧⲙ]ⲛ̄ⲧⲣⲣ̄ⲟ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ P.Kellis V Copt. 34.1 and 13–14.

41 [.]ⲉ̣ⲓ̣ⲣⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁϥ ⲛ̣̄ϥⲙⲁϩ ⲛ̣[…..]ⲁ̣ⲓ̣ⲛ̣ⲉ̣ P.Kellis V Copt. 34.21, with alternative reading ⲛ̄ϥⲙⲁϩⲛ, "and he will pay us". Gardner, Alcock, Funk, *CDT1*, 223.

42 In contrast to Klaas Worp, I see none of the formal characteristics of letters of recommendation. There is, for example, no specific request for hospitality, nor is a third party addressed who should offer it. C.H. Kim, *Form and Structure of the Familiar Greek Letter of Recommendation* (Missoula: Society of Biblical Literature for the Seminar on Paul, 1972); Stowers, *Letter Writing*, 153–4; K. Treu, "Christliche Empfehlungs-Schemabriefe auf Papyrus," in *Zetesis: Album amicorum door vrienden en collega's aangeboden aan prof. dr. É. de Strycker*, ed. E. de Strycker (Antwerpen: Nederlandsche Boekhandel, 1973), 634.

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characters, wishing to “reveal this as much as possible and to extend it through this letter.”[43] Instead of directly asking for oil and wheat, the author states: “[M] ay you remain so helpful for us as we pray” and “(later) again we benefit also from the fruits of the soul of the pious.”[44] These “fruits” indicate Manichaean almsgiving, since Manichaean literature frequently used the metaphor of fruit(s) (ⲕⲁⲣⲡⲟⲥ) for the goods given to the elect.[45] One of the other letters of the elect, moreover, employes “fruits” metaphorically to describe Eirene’s shining exemplary behavior (P.Kellis V Copt. 32.4–5). In addition, Jean-Daniel Dubois proposes to fill a lacuna with the word πεκουλιο̣ν (pocket money), thus identifying another good deed for which gratitude is expressed.[46] As in the Coptic letters, the author of P.Kellis I Gr. 63 addresses Pausanias and Pisistratos in kinship terminology, and he employs religiously marked language to express gratitude with fervor: “[O]nly our lord the Paraclete is competent to praise you as you deserve and to compensate you at the appropriate moment.”[47] With his strong Manichaean reference to the lord Paraclete, the author placed Pausanias and Pisistratos within a Manichaean framework of gift-giving and support. This framing is particularly noteworthy when one realizes that Pausanias was probably the *strategos* of the oasis, and acted as a major sponsor and benefactor of local Manichaeans.

Economic Interaction

Monetary gifts are notoriously difficult to distinguish from other types of gift exchange, as the financial endowment is not often made explicit in writing. Since few letters are devoid of economic transactions, there is ample opportunity to examine these situations with a religious background in mind. Orion’s interactions regarding textile production provide an example of letters open to multiple interpretations. In two Coptic letters, Orion discusses cowls produced for, or in association with, the elect. As in the interaction between the anonymous father and Eirene, the status of the work remains ambiguous: where the cowl a gift or part of a commercial interaction?

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43 [Π]ολ̣λῆς καὶ ἀπεί̣[ρο]υ οὔσης ἔν τ̣ε̣ δ̣ι̣ανοίᾳ καὶ στόμα̣[τι] ἡμῶν τῆ̣ς̣ ὑ̣μ̣ε̣[τ]έ̣ρ̣[α]ς ε̣ὐ̣φημία̣ς̣ [β]ο̣ύ̣λ̣[ομαι διὰ] γραμ̣μ̣ά̣τ̣[ω]ν̣ ταύτην ἐ̣π̣ὶ̣ τ̣ο̣σ̣ο̣ῦ̣τ̣ον ἐ̣κ̣φ̣ᾶναι κ̣[α]ὶ̣ ἐπ̣ε̣κτ̣εῖναι· P.Kellis I Gr. 63.5–9. A reconstruction of the situation in Worp, *GPK1*, 168–9.

44 διαμέ̣νοιτε ἡ̣μῖν τοιοῦτοι εὐχομέ̣νοις P.Kellis I Gr. 63.35–36 and … ἀ̣πολ̣αύ[ο]με̣ν̣ δ[έ] π̣άλιν κα̣ὶ τῶν ψυχικῶν τῆς ε̣ὐ̣σ̣ε̣βο̣ῦ̣ς̣ line 22–23.

45 For example in P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 42.24. Dubois, “Greek and Coptic Documents from Kellis,” 25.

46 Dubois, “Greek and Coptic Documents from Kellis,” 25.

47 Μόνος γὰρ ὁ δ[ε]σπότης ἡ̣μ̣ῶ̣ν [ὁ] π̣[α]ρ[άκ]λητος \ἱκανὸς/ ἐπαξί̣ως ὑμᾶς εὐ̣λο̣γῆσα[ι] κ̣[α]ὶ̣ τ̣[ῷ̣] δέοντι καιρῷ ἀνταμείψα̣[σ]θ̣αι. P.Kellis I Gr. 63.28–30.

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In Orion's letter to a weaving workshop, he complains about having to pay for a cowl that he has given to the "brothers." He says to the weavers:

> You wrote: "if you like it, keep it, or else 1,300 talents." So, I wrote to you that day that I had given it to the brothers (ⲛ̄ⲛⲥ̣ⲛ̣ⲏⲩ). Do you have no news? I will give you its price. Lauti told me: "the one that you (sing.) want I will bring it to you for 1,200 (talents)." (But) I did not take word from him [i.e. "make an agreement with," according to the editors of the papyri]. I said that there is no need. Now, then, will you (pl.) satisfy me in every way?[48]

What happened between Orion and the workshop? According to the editors, Orion "has given a cowl as a free gift to some 'brothers'; which probably should be understood as alms given to the local Manichaean elect."[49] The weaving workshop that sent the cowl wrote to him requesting payment. Orion expresses his discontent because he thought he clearly indicated that it was a gift. If he wanted to buy it, he could have had a lower price with Lauti![50] However, since the letter continues with discussion of further business transactions, the actual conflict may not have been a major problem. Was there really a gift to begin with or are we led astray by too strong a religious interpretation of "the brothers"? Apart from Manichaean elect, this term could very well designate close colleagues, relatives, or biological brothers. In the absence of more specific designators, the simplest interpretation is probably the best. The fact that Orion has "given" (ϩⲁϊⲧⲉⲉⲥ) it to them does not necessarily indicate a gift (as in almsgiving); it could also mean that he sold it and will give its price to the weaving workshop: "I will give you its price" (ϯⲛ̣ⲁϯⲥⲟⲩⲛⲧⲥ ⲛⲏⲧⲛ̄).

A second letter by Orion addresses Tehat and Hatre regarding similar business interactions (P.Kellis V Copt. 18). He reminds them that several types of garments should be made and dyed, and wool must be bought for at least 2,500 talents. He orders them (?) to "make them weave a cowl for the double-fringed

48 [....]... ⲛⲕⲗⲉϥⲧ ⲉⲛⲁⲛⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲑⲉ ⲛⲧ̣ⲉ̣ⲧ̣ⲁ̣ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲧⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲩⲥ ⲛⲏϊ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ϩⲁⲧⲛ̄ⲥϩⲉϊ ϫⲉ ⲁϣⲱⲡⲉ ⲉⲕⲟⲩⲁϣⲥ̄ ⲕⲁⲥ ⲛⲉⲕ ⲏ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲛ ⲙⲛ̄ⲧ̣ϣⲁⲙⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ϣⲉ ⲛ̄ϭⲛϭⲱⲣ ϩⲁϊⲥϩⲉϊ ϭⲉ ⲛⲏⲧⲛ̄ ⲙ̣̄ⲡϩⲟⲟⲩ ⲉⲧⲙ̄ⲙⲟ ϫⲉ ϩⲁϊⲧⲉⲉⲥ ⲛ̄ⲛⲥ̣ⲛ̣ⲏⲩ ⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲧ̣ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲱ ϯⲛ̣ⲁϯⲥⲟⲩⲛⲧⲥ ⲛⲏⲧⲛ̄ ϩⲁ ⲗⲁⲩϯ ϫⲟⲥ ⲛⲏ̣ϊ ϫⲉ ⲡ̣ⲉⲧⲉ̣ⲕ̣ⲟⲩⲁϣϥ ϯⲛⲁⲛ̄ⲧϥ̄ ⲛⲉⲕ ⲙ̄ⲙ̣ⲛ̄[ⲧⲥ]ⲛⲁⲩⲥ̣ ⲛ̄ϣⲉ̣ ⲙ̄ⲡⲓ̣ϫⲓ ⲥⲉϫⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲧϥ̄ ⲡⲁϫⲉϊ ϫⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲭⲣⲓⲁ ϯⲛ̣ⲟ̣ⲩ̣ ϭⲉ ⲧⲉⲧⲛⲁⲧⲁⲣⲱϣⲉ ⲛ̄ϩⲉ ⲛⲓ̣ⲙ̣ P.Kellis VII Copt. 58.1–9. See the notes on this translation in A. Boud'hors, "Review of Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis. Volume 2," *Journal of Coptic Studies* 18 (2016): 198–99.

49 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 23.

50 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 23. This interpretation is followed by Baker-Brian, "Mass and Elite," 177.

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gown (?) of our brother Sa[..]ren the presbyter."[51] Was this cowl an alms gift produced for one of the Manichaean elect? The name Saren reappears in the letter cited above (P.Kellis VII Copt. 58), where it says:

> These fabrics and these cowls belong to our brother Saren. Now, as he will come, would you be so very kind … bid (?) Eraklei to write to get them to come to the Oasis; and I shall also go there and see you. He wants the fabrics to make them into jerkins.[52]

In this case, brother Saren provided the cowls' fabrics, and he would pick the product up after his journey in the Nile valley. Orion himself operated in this way when he sent fabric to Lautine for a *kolobion* and a cowl (P.Kellis V Copt. 18). Instead of receiving an alms gift, it appears that Saren was conducting long-distance business with Orion and various intermediaries. Still, one could argue that "brother Saren" was the Manichaean (?) presbyter in Orion's letter P.Kellis V Copt. 18. This would require an alternative reconstruction to remove the lacuna in the papyrus ("our brother Sa[..]ren the presbyter," ⲙ̣̄ⲡⲛ̄ⲥ̣ⲁⲛ ⲥⲁ[..]ⲣⲏ̣ⲛ̣ [ⲡ]ⲡⲣⲉ[ⲥ]ⲃⲏⲧⲟⲣⲟⲥ), but it would solidify an interpretation in which Manichaean elect had a longstanding cooperation with Orion (and others), either within textile production, or to distribute the cowls as alms gifts to elect further away.[53] Both letters allow for an economic and religious interpretation, placing almsgiving within the everyday context of textile manufacturing and trade.[54]

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51 ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ[ⲧ]ⲛ̄ⲣⲟⲩⲥⲉ̣ϩ̣ ⲟⲩⲕⲗⲉϥⲧ̄ ⲛ̄ⲡⲗⲁⲩ ⲥⲛⲟ̣ ⲙ̣̄ⲡⲛ̄ⲥ̣ⲁⲛ ⲥⲁ[..]ⲣⲏ̣ⲛ̣ [ⲡ]ⲡⲣⲉ[ⲥ]ⲃⲏⲧⲟⲣⲟⲥ P.Kellis V Copt. 18.21–23.

52 ⲛⲓϩⲏⲛⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛⲓ[ⲕⲗⲉ]ϥⲧ̣ ⲛ̣ⲉⲡⲛ̄ⲥ̣ⲁⲛ ⲛⲉ ⲥ̣ⲁⲣⲏⲛ ⲉϥⲛⲁϊ ϭⲉ ⲉ[……] ϩⲉⲗϭⲏⲧ ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ ⲧⲟ[ⲛⲟⲩ] . ⲥ̣ϩⲱ̣ⲛ ⲏ̣ⲣⲁ̣ⲕⲗ<ⲉⲓ̣> ⲁⲥϩⲉ̣ⲓ̣ ⲁⲧⲣⲟⲩϊ ⲁⲟⲩⲁϩ̣ⲉ̣ ⲧⲁ̣[ⲃⲱⲕ ⲁ]ⲙⲉⲩ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲛⲟ̣ ⲁⲣⲱ̣[ⲧ]ⲛ̄ ϥⲟⲩ̣ⲱϣ ⲛ̄ϩⲏⲛⲉ ⲁⲥⲙ̣ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ϩⲛ̄ⲑⲱⲣ̣ⲁ̣ⲝ̣ [.....] P.Kellis VII Copt 58.b21–23 (translation modified). The editors note the alternative interpretation of Livingstone, suggesting a scarf as subject of discussion. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 25.

53 Teigen, *The Manichaean Church in Kellis*, 229, 238. It should be pointed out that presbyters in the Kellis papyri are not exclusively Manichaean. Non-Manichaean presbyters are mentioned in P.Kellis VII Copt. 124, without any specification in P.Kellis VII Copt. 92. Those addressed in the letter of the Teacher (P.Kellis VII Copt. 61) must have been Manichaean elect with an ecclesiastical function.

54 I see no reason to follow Dubois's interpretation of the financial arrangements as belonging to a communal fund from which salary was paid to itinerant elect. J.D. Dubois, "Une lettre manichéenne de Kellis (P.Kell. Copt 18)," in *Early Christian Voices*, ed. D.H. Warren, A.G. Brock, and D.W. Pao (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 437; On economic interactions with other fourth-century ascetics, see Wipszycka, *Études sur le christianisme dans l'Égypte de l'antiquité tardive*, 324; E. Wipszycka, *Moines et communautés monastiques en Égypte* (*IVᵉ–VIIIᵉ siècles*) (Warsaw: Journal of Juristic Papyrology, 2009), 519–26; J.E. Goehring,

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Household-Support Structures

Most letters with requests for commodities were part of a household-support structure. The household was "the most important institution for the health and welfare of its members, and the basis for redistributing resources between generations"; it played "a critical role in caring for the vulnerable members of society: children, the ill, the disabled, and the old."[55] The social expectations concerning obligation, mutual support, and reciprocity were primarily informal, and traditional patterns of family support intersected only occasionally with formalized legal obligations of care (like those related to property and inheritance). Most settings were governed by traditional common sense. The household, defined as those people who share one roof, which included kin, non-kin, and enslaved persons, supported each other in times of difficulty, whether this included losing a partner, child, or parent, suffering from childlessness, or struggling with old age. Failure to support each other had strong social implications. To neglect the obligation to care for one's parents, for example, could affect claims on the inheritance (see the tensions in P.Kellis VII Copt. 64, discussed in chapter 1).[56]

In the papyri, the household was the main location for gift-giving and economic transactions. The family was the "primary site of production, reproduction, consumption and the intergenerational transmission of property and knowledge undergirding production in the Roman world."[57] As in elsewhere in the later Roman Empire, the women at Kellis worked at home. They had a central role as key figures in family networks, especially when their husbands and sons traveled into the Nile valley to conduct trade and sell agricultural goods from the oasis.[58] As a result, a large number of Kellis letters (the editors

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"The World Engaged: The Social and Economic World of Early Egyptian Monasticism," in *Ascetics, Society, and the Desert* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1999), 39–52. Examples of ascetics working in the textile industry include ascetics like Apa Paieous (P.Lond. 1920, 1922). Discussion about the way Christian ascetics were involved in the local economy has been fueled by the economic transactions in the letters from the cartonnage of the Nag Hammadi Codices. Ewa Wipszycka and John Shelton have argued against the monastic nature of some of these letters, as initially proposed by John Barns and defended in H. Lundhaug and L. Jenott, *The Monastic Origins of the Nag Hammadi Codices* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), 104–39. Examples of ascetics working in the textile industry include ascetics like Apa Paieous (P.Lond. 1920, 1922).

55 Huebner, *Family in Roman Egypt*, 3.

56 Discussed with the example of P.Oxy. VII 1067 (third century CE), in Bagnall and Cribiore, *Women's Letters*, 273.

57 Saller, "The Roman Family as Productive Unit," 116.

58 Some references to exceptional situations with women working outside the house are found in R.P. Saller, "Women, Slaves, and the Economy of the Roman Household," in *Early*

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suggest more than forty percent) were either written by women, or addressed to them.[59] The correspondences of Makarios, Matthaios, and Piene reveal that "mother Maria" in Kellis was kept in the loop for all daily accounts and expenses. Some of Makarios's requests to Maria dealt with the everyday concerns of their household. For example, he asks Maria to send support for their children, "send a pair of sandals to Matthaios, for he has none at all."[60] Other sections of the letters reveal that Maria had to sell goods to raise money for Makarios's journey with the children (P.Kellis V Copt. 19.32). The financial situation of their household must have been precarious, since in the same letter Makarios suggests a number of fundraising strategies to Maria. He is not able to afford the entire tariff and asks her to write "the woman within" (ⲧⲣⲙⲛ̄ϩⲟⲩⲛ) for money, while noting "these young ones" (ⲛ̄ⲛⲓⲗⲗ̄ⲁⲩⲉ) as another source of at least 1000 talents (?).[61] Even while sending greetings to his son Matthaios and their relative Drousiane, Makarios suggests they could write letters in his name or talk to Kouria (Kyria?) in the hope that "perhaps she will give something."[62]

Since Makarios's children traveled with the elect, their requests obscure the distinction between household support and almsgiving. In P.Kellis V Copt. 20, Makarios again complains about Maria's neglect, accusing her of no longer remembering them at all. She had promised to send letters and goods with Philammon and Pamour of Tjkoou, but never delivered:

> The other things that you spoke about, saying: "I will send them by way of Pamour"; and even the garment for Mathaios, you did not send it! Now indeed, if you have fixed it, then send it to him; for he needs it. Also the cushion; and the book about which I sent to you saying: "send it to me"; you have neither send it nor said why you have not sent it![63]

Christian Families in Context, ed. D.L. Balch and C. Osiek (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 185–204.

59 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 13–14.

60 ⲧⲛⲛⲁⲩ ⲟⲩⲧⲟⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲟⲩⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲑⲁⲓⲟⲥ ϫⲉ ⲙⲛⲧⲉϥ ϩⲟⲗⲱⲥ P.Kellis V Copt. 20.58.

61 "The woman within" is a designator used for someone who is greeted twice by Makarios (P.Kellis V Copt. 19.54, 65 and 22.78). The male version was sometimes used for a minor ecclesiastical office, cited in Crum, *CD*, 687a. Franzmann has rejected the option of a secluded *electa*, as this does not appear to have been a Manichaean tenet. Franzmann, "The Manichaean Women in the Greek and Coptic Letters from Kellis."

62 ⲧⲁⲭⲁ ⲛ̄ⲥ̣ϯ ⲟⲩⲗⲁⲩⲉ P.Kellis V Copt. 19.74.

63 ⲛ̄ⲕⲉϩⲛⲁ̣ⲩⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲣⲉϫⲟⲥ ⲉⲧ[ⲃ]ⲏⲧⲟⲩ ϫⲉ ϯⲛⲁⲧⲛⲛⲁⲩⲥ̣ⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲧϥ ⲙⲡⲁⲙⲟⲩⲣ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲧⲕⲉϩⲁïⲧⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲑⲁⲓⲟⲥ ⲁⲛ ⲙⲡⲉⲧ[ⲛ]ⲛⲁⲩⲥ. ϯⲛⲟⲩ ϭⲉ ⲉϣⲱⲡⲉ ⲁⲣⲉⲥⲙⲛⲧⲥ[ⲉⲓ]ⲉ ⲧⲛⲛⲁⲩⲥ ⲛⲉϥ ϫⲉ ϥⲣⲭⲣⲓⲁ ⲙⲙⲁⲥ ⲡⲕⲉϣⲁⲧ ⲙ̣[ⲛ] ⲡ̣ϫⲱⲙⲉ ⲉⲧⲁïⲧⲛⲛⲁⲩ ⲛⲉ ⲉⲧⲃⲏⲧϥ ϫⲉ ⲧⲛⲛ̣[ⲁ]ⲩϥ ⲛⲏï ⲙⲡⲉⲧⲛⲛⲁⲩϥ ⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲙⲡⲉϫⲟⲥ ϫⲉ ⲉⲧ[ⲃ]ⲉ ⲟ ⲙⲡⲉⲧⲛⲛⲁⲩϥ P.Kellis V Copt. 20. 31–38.

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While details about the book and the cushion remain unexplained, it may be that a Manichaean book was sent along with Matthaios's repaired garment (maybe for him to copy, see chapter 7).[64]

Mutual support extended beyond the immediate family, and included Manichaean "next of kin." The distinction between the two is not always easy, as the heavy usage of fictive kinship terminology makes it almost impossible to reconstruct who belonged to the household and who belonged to a wider Manichaean network. Still, various exchanges took place between Manichaean catechumens. In the postscript of P.Kellis VII Copt. 66, for example, Maria mentions two portions of pickled fish to be given to Chares, who is known from letters with explicit Manichaean repertoire.[65] It they are indeed both catechumens, the fish stands out. The ideology behind ritualized almsgiving suggests that food and inedible almsgifts, given to anyone other than the Manichaean elect, cannot support the liberation of the Living Soul (note also the earlier mentioned rejection of fish as an improper alms gift).

Despite this line of thought, there is one section in the *Kephalaia* where gifts to catechumens are discussed (1 Keph. 77). In this chapter, Mani proclaims that those who give are greater than the four greatest kingdoms on earth: "whoever will give bread and a cup of water to one of my disciples on account of the name of God, on account of this truth that I have revealed; that one is great before God." The recipients of these gifts of water and bread (traditional ascetic Eucharistic food) now include catechumens, as the *Kephalaia* states that, "whoever will give bread and a cup of water to a catechumen of the truth, on account of the name of God and on account of the truth that has become evident to those who came near to the truth, his end will turn to rest forever." Just as catechumens are praised for their almsgiving, donors who give to catechumens receive praise: "whoever will have fellowship with catechumens who

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64 The initial request (or a repetition) is found in another letter asking for "the dyed cushion for the book" as well as threads (пϣаⲧ̣ ⲛⲏ̈ ⲛ̄ϫⲏϭⲉ ⲙ̄пϫⲱⲙⲉ P.Kellis V Copt. 21.24). Unfortunately, the exact nature of ϣаⲧ and the situation remain largely beyond our comprehension. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 174. If the cover was decorated, however, one would expect the Coptic word ⲕⲟⲉⲓϩ instead of ϣаⲧ. "Cushion" (ϣаⲧ) is never used by other late antique authors in the context of book production. A. Boud'hors, "Copie et circulation des livres dans la région thébaine (VIIe–VIIIe siècles)," in *"Et maintenant ce ne sont plus que des villages ...": Thèbes et sa région aux époques hellénistique, romaine et byzantine*, ed. A. Delattre and P. Heilporn (Bruxelles: Association Égyptologique Reine Élisabeth, 2008), 149–61. For the remains of a cushion, found in a burial context in Kellis, see Livingstone, "Late Antique Household Textiles," 78.

65 ϫⲓ ⲛⲉⲕ ⲛ̄ⲧⲥаϣⲃⲉ ⲛ̄ϣаⲧⲥ̄ ⲛ̄ⲧⲃ̄ⲧ ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲧϥ ⲙ̄пⲉⲃⲟ ϫⲓ ⲧⲥ̣ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ϣаⲧⲥ̄ ⲉⲩпаⲣ̣ϫ̣ ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲧϥ ⲛ̄ⲃⲟ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲩ ⲛ̄ⲭа̣[ⲣⲏⲥ] P.Kellis VII Copt. 66.44–46. See the reconstruction of the situation in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 56.

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are within the knowledge, and helps them, he surpasses these kingdoms that I have counted for you."[66] Technical terminology like "alms" and "fellowship," commonly used for catechumens' gifts to the elect, is applied to the gifts to catechumens, "[H]e will give them alms and have fellowship with them."[67] In fact, it may have had similar benefits as normative alms gifts to the elect, as the text promises that the giver's "end will turn to eternal rest."[68] In this way, gifts to fellow catechumens carried cosmic significance. The inclusion of catechumens as recipients of gift exchange may have originated in situations similar to the one in Kellis, where the circumstances led to a system of long-distance support of both elect and catechumens, equally dependent on the help of family, friends, and fellow Manichaeans.

Charity to Non-elect

Augustine's remarks about Manichaean food exclusivity are cited at the outset of this chapter. In polemical language, he accuses Manichaeans of selfishness and gluttony, stating that they never gave bread to beggars because it would hurt the Living Soul. In fact, he notes that to Manichaeans, giving bread to beggars equaled murder, as the Living Soul could not be released when food

66 ⲁⲛⲁⲕ ⲇⲉ ϯϫⲱ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲥ ⲁⲣⲱⲧⲛ̄ ϩⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲙⲏⲉ ϫⲉ ⲡⲉⲧ̣[ⲛⲁϯ]ⲁϊⲕ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲁⲡⲁⲧ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲩ ⲛⲟⲩⲉ ⲛⲛⲁⲙⲁⲑⲏⲧⲏⲥ ⲉ̣[ⲧⲃⲉ ⲡⲣⲉⲛ ⲙⲡⲛ]ⲟⲩ̣ⲧ̣ⲉ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲡⲣⲉⲛ ⲛ̄ϯⲙⲏⲉ ⲉⲧⲁϊϭ[ⲁ]ⲗ[ⲡⲥ] ⲁ̣ⲃⲁⲗ̣ [ⲡ]ⲉⲧⲙⲙⲉⲩ ⲉⲛⲉⲉϥ ϩⲁⲧⲙ̄ ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ [ⲉϥⲟ]ⲩⲁⲧⲃⲉ ⲛ[ϩⲟⲩⲟ] ⲁϯϥⲧⲟⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁϭ ⲙ̄ⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲣ̄ⲣⲟ ⲉⲧⲟ ⲛ̄ⲛ[ⲁϭ ⲙ]ⲡⲓⲣⲏⲧⲉ ϥⲣ̣ϩ̣ⲟ̣ⲩⲟ̣ ⲁⲛ ⲡⲁⲣⲁ ⲛⲟⲩⲙⲁⲧⲉϭⲧⲉ ⲉⲡⲉⲓ̣ⲇ̣ⲏ̣ ⲙ̣ⲡⲟⲩⲥⲱⲧ̣ⲙ̄ ⲁⲧ̄ⲙⲏⲉ ⲙⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲟⲩⲣ̄ⲃⲟ[ⲏⲑⲟ]ⲥ ⲛⲧⲇ̣[ⲓⲕⲁ]ⲓ̣ⲟⲥⲩⲛⲏ ⲟⲩ ⲙⲟⲛⲟⲛ ⲡⲉϊ ⲁⲗⲗⲁ ⲡⲉⲧⲛⲁ[ϯ] ⲁϊⲕ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲁⲡⲁⲧ ⲙⲙⲁⲩ ⲛⲟⲩⲕⲁⲧⲏⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧ[ⲙⲏⲉ ⲉⲧ]ⲃⲉ ⲡⲣⲉⲛ ⲙⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲉⲧ̣ⲃⲉ ⲡⲣⲉⲛ ⲛ̄ⲧⲙⲏⲉ [ⲉⲧϭⲁⲗⲡ] ⲙⲡⲉⲧⲙ̄ⲙⲉⲩ ⲧϩⲛⲁϊⲧ ⲁϩⲟⲩⲛ ⲁⲧ̣[ⲙⲏⲉ ⲧⲉ]ϥϩⲁⲏ̣ ⲛⲁⲕ̣[ⲱ]ⲧⲉ ⲁⲡⲙ̄ⲧⲁⲛ ϣⲁ ⲁⲛⲏϩⲉ [ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲡⲥⲉϫⲉ] ⲡⲉⲧⲁ ⲡⲥ̄ⲏ̄[ⲣ ⲛⲁ]ⲅⲁⲑⲟⲥ ⲧⲉⲟⲩⲁϥ ϫⲉ ⲡ[ⲉⲧⲛⲁϯ ⲁϊⲕ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲁⲡⲁⲧ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲩ] ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲓⲕⲟ̣ⲩ̣ⲓ̣ [ⲙⲡⲓⲥⲧⲟ]ⲥ̣ ⲉⲧⲛⲁϩⲧⲉ ⲁⲣⲁϊ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲡⲣ̣ⲉ̣ⲛ̣ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲙⲁⲑⲏ̣ⲧ̣ⲏ̣ⲥ̣ …… ⲕⲉⲛⲁ.… ⲉ ⲉⲛ ⲉⲣⲉ [ⲡ]ⲥ̣̄ⲏ̣̄[ⲣ] ⲙⲉⲛ ⲙⲟⲩⲧ̣[ⲉ] ⲁⲛⲓⲡⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ ϫⲉ ⲕⲟⲩϊ ⲙⲡⲓⲥⲧⲟⲥ ⲁⲛⲁⲕ ⲇⲉ ⲉⲓⲥ ϩⲉⲧⲉ ⲁϊⲧⲉⲟⲩⲁϥ ⲛ̣̄ⲛⲕⲁⲧⲏⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ [ϫ]ⲉ ⲡⲉⲧⲛⲁⲕⲟⲓⲛⲱⲛⲏ ⲙⲛ̄ ϩⲛ̄ⲕⲁⲧⲏⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ ⲉⲩϩ̣ⲙ̣ ⲡⲥⲁⲩⲛⲉ ⲛϥ̄ⲣ̄ⲃⲟⲏⲑⲉⲓ ⲁⲣⲁⲩ ϥⲟⲩⲁⲧⲃⲉ ⲡⲁⲣⲁ ⲛⲓ[ⲙ ⲛ] [ⲧ]ⲣⲣⲁϊ ⲉⲧⲁϊⲁⲡⲟⲩ ⲛⲏⲧⲛ̄ 1 Keph. 77, 189.6–25 (modified translation, Cf. the German edition). The entire chapter seems to redirect the standard gift-giving pattern and expand it in order to include the catechumens. Twice in this chapter, the catechumens are the subject of Jesus's biblical commandment to give to "these little ones" (Matt 10.42 cf. Mark 9:36–37). Indeed, the catechumens *and* the elect are inhabited by the "holy spirit," who will return the favor done for them via the "true father" (1 Keph. 77, 190.4).

67 [ϥ]ⲛⲁϯ ⲛⲉⲩ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲙⲛⲧⲛⲁⲉ ⲛ̄ϥⲕⲟⲓⲛⲱⲛⲏ ⲛⲉⲙⲉⲩ 1 Keph. 77, 190.1.

68 [ⲧⲉ]ϥϩⲁⲏ̣ ⲛⲁⲕ̣[ⲱ]ⲧⲉ ⲁⲡⲙ̄ⲧⲁⲛ ϣⲁ ⲁⲛⲏϩⲉ 1 Keph. 77, 189.16–17 (translation modified). In fact, some of these gifts may have derived from non-Manichaeans with a positive attitude toward the church. The *Kephalaia* suggests that these outsiders may find "rest" (ⲡⲙ̄ⲧⲁⲛ 1 Keph. 77, 189.17). This is interesting, as the *Sermon on the Great War* only describes the damnation of non-Manichaeans and sees no sympathizers outside the church. Pedersen, *Studies*, 362.

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was given to someone other than the elect.[69] A thought-provoking reference to this type of giving is found in a fragmentary passage regarding a business transaction in Kellis. The author, a woman who may be identified as Tehat, urges her son to

> have pity for them and you set up (?) some pots for them; for they have father nor mother. And until you know (?), the baked loaves ... every widow eats (?) ... find it ... charity (ⲛⲁⲉ); and he ... and he has mercy (ⲛϥⲛⲁⲉ̣) on them in their....[70]

This passage seems to imply that Tehat wants her son to provide charity to widows and orphans, although the fragmentary nature hampers fuller understanding. Could this mean that the Manichaeans in Kellis gave food for charitable purposes?

The current interpretations of this passage favor Augustine's polemical accounts over a minimalist reading. Rather than considering the possibility of mundane charitable gifts, Majella Franzmann, Johannes van Oort, and Håkon F. Teigen suggest that the account actually refers to Manichaean alms gifts to the elect.[71] This option is legitimate, as Manichaean liturgical texts

69 As stressed earlier, pure almsgiving is of pivotal importance to Manichaeans. Compare with the Parthian homily M6020, where the elect are warned only to accept food when they are able to redeem it. To do otherwise would be committing the gravest sin against the Living Soul, one that also rubs off on the catechumen who donated the food. The homily is published and discussed in W. Henning, "A Grain of Mustard," *AION-L* (1965), 29–47.

70 [....] ϣⲛ̄ ϩⲧⲏⲕ ϩⲁⲣⲁⲩ̣ ⲛⲕⲧⲟⲩⲛ.[...] ϩⲛⲟ ⲛⲉⲩ ϫⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲉ̣ⲩ ⲓⲱⲧ ⲟ̣[ⲩⲧⲉ] ⲙⲟ ⲙⲉⲭⲣⲓ ⲇⲉ ⲕⲙⲉ ⲛ̣ϭⲁ̣ϭⲉ̣ ... ⲭⲏⲣⲉ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲟⲩⲟⲙ̄ ⲙⲙ̣ⲉⲥ̣.... ϭⲛ̄ⲧⲥ̄ . ⲧⲉ ⲛⲁⲉ ⲛϥ̄.... ⲁϩⲣ̣ⲏⲓ̈ ⲛϥⲛⲁⲉ̣ ⲣⲁⲩ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧ̣ⲟ̣ⲩ ..̄.... P.Kellis v Copt. 43.17–22 (slightly modified translation, the lacuna's make the passage very difficult to understand). In P.Kellis v Copt. 19.51, a "charitable person (? ⲣⲱ]ⲙⲉ ⲉϥⲛⲁⲉ̣)" is mentioned, albeit without clear context.

71 M. Franzmann, "Augustine and Manichaean Almsgiving: Understanding a Universal Religion with Exclusivist Practices," in *Augustine and Manichaean Christianity*, ed. J. van Oort (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 42–3; Cf. Teigen, *The Manichaean Church at Kellis*, 230. Recent scholars who consider Augustine's testimony regarding Manichaeism as mainly reliable and that it may be critically used as historical evidence include J. van Oort, "The Young Augustine's Knowledge of Manichaeism: An Analysis of the Confessiones and Some Other Relevant Texts," *Vigiliae Christianae* 62, no. 5 (2008): 441–66; Coyle, "What Did Augustine Know," 251–63; J. van Oort, "Augustine and the Books of the Manichaeans," in *A Companion to Augustine*, ed. M. Vessey (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 188–99. There is, moreover, an irony in Augustine's emphasis on Manichaean gift exclusivity, since he himself urged his readers to give to a common fund under the distribution of the bishop, instead of giving directly to others. Augustine, *Enarrat. Ps.* 63.11, referred to in Finn, *Almsgiving*, 46.

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sometimes portray the elect as strangers who left the houses of their parents; they could be understood as spiritual orphans in need of support.[72] Tehat mentions not only orphans (ορφα[νο]ϲ̣) and widows (χηρε), but also "these strangers" (ⲛ̄ⲛⲓϣⲙ̣̄ⲙⲁⲉⲓ), all of whom also feature in a passage from the *Homilies* on almsgiving (Hom. 17.11–14). Since the content of Tehat's account is fragmentary, it is possible to understand it as alluding to alms gifts, rather than to material care for the poor, such as the two orphaned girls from letter P.Kellis VII Copt. 73.

On the other hand, a minimalist approach must ask whether Manichaeans really stopped supporting family members and needy neighbors. It is hard to imagine a village life in which the boundaries of solidarity-based giving were strictly limited to people's own religious elites, even though there are modern religious groups that take a strong exclusive stance. Franzmann also questions her own harmonization of the sources. "Perhaps," she rightly suggests, "Augustine was not completely right in every case."[73] As forcefully argued by Baker-Brian, Augustine employs all of his considerable rhetorical talents to ridicule and denigrate his former coreligionists.[74] Augustine's remarks about food exclusion have to be read in the larger context of his charge of gluttony against Manichaeans: the elect lacked self-control and had to stuff themselves with food, since no leftovers were allowed. Augustine even accused Manichaeans of force-feeding children to death to preclude leftover food (*Mor. Manich.*

72 Widows and orphans are frequently mentioned together in Early Christian writings (for example in the New Testament, James 1.27) and appear together in Manichaean writing as well (2 PsB. 53.24–25, 62.16–17, 175.20–24 etc.). The designation of elect as orphans, widows and strangers is found in the Manichaean psalms, "thou bearest witness of my course, o blessed Light, that I have ministered to the widows, the orphans, the Righteous." ⲕⲣ̄ⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁϭⲓⲛⲡⲱⲧ ⲱ ⲡⲟⲩⲁⲓ̈ⲛⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲟⲥ ϫⲉ ⲁⲓ̈ϣⲙ̄ϣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲭⲏⲣⲁ ⲛ̄ⲟⲣⲫⲁⲛⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲇⲓⲕⲁⲓⲟⲥ 2 PsB. 252 62.16–17. In another passage the disciples are called "wandering orphans" in need of a specific revelation. ϣⲱⲡⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ⲛ̄ⲃⲁⲓ̈ϣⲓⲛⲉ ϣⲁⲛⲓⲟⲣ[ⲫⲁⲛⲟⲥ ⲉⲧⲥⲁ]ⲣ̣ⲙⲉ "be a messenger for me to these wandering orphans" 2 PsB. 187.11–13, Cf. 53.24–25. Similar statements in 2 PsB. 175.21–2 in which the singer has "clothed thy orphans," directly after "served all these holy ones" (ⲁⲓ̈ϣⲙ̄ϣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲕⲡⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ ⲧⲏⲣ[ⲟ]ⲩ ⲁⲓ̈ϯ ϩⲓⲱⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲕⲟⲣⲫⲁⲛⲟⲥ). All cited examples, however, can be read as lists instead of summations. In other words, they create the impression that care for orphans and widows was almost as important as the daily almsgiving to the elect. *Contra* Franzmann, "Augustine and Manichaean Almsgiving," 42–3.

73 Franzmann, "Augustine and Manichaean Almsgiving," 48. Likewise, Peter Arzt-Grabner has highlighted, on the basis of papyrological sources, how Christians continued to attend private festivals with traditional sacrifices and meals in temple halls. Exclusivity was difficult to maintain when weddings and other private festivities were celebrated with non-Christian relatives and friends. P. Arzt-Grabner, "Why Did Early Christ Groups Still Attend Idol Meals? Answers from Papyrus Invitations," *Early Christianity* 7 (2016): 508–29.

74 Baker-Brian, "Between Testimony and Rumour," 31–53.

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2.16.52).[75] He repeatedly emphasized the vices of Manichaeans, who he said were not even capable of holding the rules of the Decalogue without distorting them (*Faust.* 15.7). These passages do not directly help us to interpret Tehat's "charity," but they illustrate Augustine's polemical agenda.

Patronage

Inhabitants of Kellis depended on the goodwill of their local patrons. The social structure in which wealthy patrons gave commodities and services to their clients in return for honor, votes, or other services was one of the fundamentals of Roman society.[76] In Late Antiquity, some of these patronage structures changed as a result of the increasing complexity and fragmentation of society. Urban and rural councilors, emerging bishops, ascetics, military leaders, former magistrates, and the provincial governor and his staff were all potential patrons who competed for the favor of the general population. Villagers could, therefore, shift allegiances, play their patrons, and seek the services that benefited them best.[77] This led the fourth-century Antiochian rhetor Libanius to complain about the decay of well-structured society. In his opinion, peasants used the multiplicity of available patrons to their advantage, though ideally it was the rural landlord who assumed "the role of the protector, monopolizing the dual functions of a patron, as a provider of protection and resources and as a broker controlling access to the outside world."[78]

The Kellis papyri show patronage at work in the Greek legal appeals to Roman military and administrative elites (e.g. P.Kellis I Gr. 20) and the material support of Pausanias, the *strategos* of the oasis (P.Kellis I Gr. 38ab). The latter example most clearly illustrates how the relationship was built on pseudo-economic transactions (in this case involving an "irrevocable gift," see

75 Baker-Brian, "Between Testimony and Rumour," 46. With regard to ex-member testimonial, the sociologist Bryan Wilson writes: "The sociologist of contemporary sectarianism need to rely neither on fragments nor on biased witnesses. Indeed, with good reason, sociologists generally treat the evidence of a sect's theological opponents, of the aggrieved relatives of sectarians, and of the disaffected and apostate with some circumspection." Wilson, *The Social Dimensions of Sectarianism*, 6.

76 Patronage is the "enduring bond between two persons of unequal social and economic status, which implies and is maintained by periodic exchanges of goods and services, and also has social and affective dimensions." P. Garnsey and G. Woolf, "Patronage of the Rural Poor in the Roman World," in *Patronage in Ancient Society*, ed. A. Wallace-Hadrill (London: Routledge, 1989), 154.

77 A.G. López, *Shenoute of Atripe and the Uses of Poverty* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 4–5.

78 Garnsey and Woolf, "Patronage of the Rural Poor in the Roman World," 162; Libanius, *Oration* 47.19, 22.

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chapter 2). One of the most important patronage relationships was between a client and his landlord. While we cannot identify direct relationships between a landlord and the families living in the Houses 1–3, the papyri show exactly how various obligations to landlords were paid. Sometimes the rent was paid in silver drachmas (P.Kellis I Gr. 62), but commodities such as wheat, barley, and dates were frequently used to replace money (KAB 330ff, 1146, 1167 etc.). Likewise, wages could be paid in barley (P.Kellis V Copt. 48), wheat (P.Kellis V Copt. 46), or oil (P.Kellis V Copt. 47 for the production of a piece of garment).[79] This indicates that food gifts were commonly given within existing commercial or patronage relationships.[80]

Summary: Gift Giving at a Distance

When all the evidence for the plurality of socioeconomic engagement in the Kellis letters is taken into account, the centrality of Manichaean almsgiving fades into the background. Although itinerant elect certainly asked for the support of Manichaean catechumens, most of the letters attest to economic interactions and local gift exchanges that occurred for more mundane reasons. Manichaean almsgiving was affected by the geographical circumstances of the oasis, particularly the long distance traveling to the Nile valley. In contrast to the situations sketched in Manichaean doctrinal texts, the elect and catechumens in Kellis did not gather on a daily basis for almsgiving and a ritualized meal. In fact, most references to the elect place them firmly outside the oasis. Both of the elect's fundraising letters explicitly locate the father(s) "in Egypt," which designated the Nile valley.[81] Makarios's, Piene's and Matthaios's letters also report about the elect residing in Alexandria or traveling the cities of the valley. Apa Lysimachos was said to reside in Antinoou (P.Kellis V Copt. 21), where he could forward letters to the oasis and back. The Teacher also traveled toward Alexandria with his entire retinue and Piene (P.Kellis V Copt. 29). This does not mean that the elect never visited the oasis. On the contrary, some

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79 On the numerous small parcels and array of commodities which were used to pay rent, see D.P. Kehoe, "Tenancy and Oasis Agriculture on an Egyptian Estate of the 4th C. A.D.," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 12, no. 2 (1999): 746. He notes that wine was also used to pay for "service" (presumably wages for workers other than tenants. If *Topos Mani* would have constituted a Manichaean monastery, which I will argue it did not, it would have paid a rent in olives.

80 A direct connection to the Manichaean families cannot be established, with the exception of a fragmentary passage in P.Kellis V Copt. 20 by Makarios, in which the "master" has to be sent a *maje* of something as rent.

81 Makarios writes about "when I came to Egypt" and "we delayed coming to Egypt" (P.Kellis V Copt. 22). Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 207, also 12. This designation is also found in early monastic literature. See the *Vit. Ant.* 57, cited in Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 144.

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may have visited the village and organized a type of gift exchange that corresponded to the local circumstances, so that the elect, despite geographical distance, could survive.

The Manichaean families in the oasis were several days of travel removed from the Nile valley. Other Manichaean communities must have existed throughout Egypt, forming a regional network that supported itinerant elect. Despite the general dearth of evidence for these other communities, we do have Greek Manichaean letters of recommendation attesting to a group style centered around itinerancy. Two Greek letters of recommendation from Oxyrhynchus could be identified as Manichaean after the discovery and translation of the Kellis letters (P.Oxy. XXXI 2603 and P.Oxy. LXXIII 4965).[82] Not only do they reveal a widespread Manichaean network in Egypt, but they also illustrate the way in which travelers were vouched for. In one of these letters, a man named Paul writes brother Serapion about his friends: "[R]eceive them therefore in love, as friends, for they are not catechumens but belong to the company of Ision and Nikolaos."[83] Another letter writer, Ammonius, writes in recommendation of unnamed travelers, asking that they might be received by "you and the brethren at your place in faith of the Paracletic Mind; for nothing more holy (?) has he commanded us."[84] Both letter writers, thus, testify about the Manichaean affiliation of travelers, recommending them to local families or communities for hospitality. The travelers in Paul's letter are identified as elect, since they were "not catechumens," but belonged to the retinue of two individuals who were supposedly known to Serapion. These men, Ision and Nikolaos, could have been Manichaean officials whose names carried some authority.[85] With such authorization and recommendation, the traveling elect

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82 J.H. Harrop, "A Christian Letter of Commendation," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 48 (1962): 140 "numerous theological and mystical overtones." I. Gardner, "Personal Letters from the Manichaean Community at Kellis," in *Manicheismo e Oriente cristiano antico*, ed. L. Cirillo and A. van Tongerloo (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997), 87 they "deserve reconsideration"; C. Römer, "Manichaean Letter," in *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri* ed. P. Parson, et al. (London: The Egypt Exploration Society, 2009), 194–96; Gardner, Nobbs, and Choat, "P. Harr. 107," 118; See the critique in Martinez, "The Papyri and Early Christianity," 602.

83 Προσδέξαι οὖν ἐν ἀγάπῃ ὡς φίλους, οὐ γὰρ κατηχούμενοί εἰσιν ἀ[λ]λὰ τῶν περὶ Ἰσίωνος καὶ Νικολάου ἴδ[ί]οι \τυγχάνουσι/. P.Oxy. XXXI 2603.25–28. This letter employs a curious metaphor about a mirror and mentions the "elect and catechumens."

84 σὺν τοῖς κατὰ [τόπον σου ἀδ]ελφοῖς πειθόμε[νος τῷ παρα]κλητικῷ λόγῳ [… – ca. 10 –]τος μετὰ τοῦ πρεσβευτοῦ ὑπο]δέξῃ. Οὐδὲν γὰρ [ἁγιώτερον] ἡμῖν ἔκρινεν. P.Oxy. LXXIII 4965.8–13. This letter, moreover, also mentions the "elect and catechumens" as well as "the Teacher."

85 These two individuals are not mentioned in the Kellis letters, unless we identify Ision with the Ision found in P.Kellis I Gr 67 and P.Kellis VII Copt. 80, which is not entirely unlikely since he is a lector in the Manichaean church. Gardner, "Once More," 305n58;

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could be welcomed and received in a proper way. The second passage does not identify the travelers as elect or catechumens, but explicitly reminds its recipients of their shared faith and frames the request by mentioning the "Paracletic mind," which is never used in other papyrus letters outside the Kellis corpus. The Greek Manichaean letters of recommendation, thus, illustrate how a network based on long-distance connections could function without everyday interactions.

The *Agape*, a Manichaean Ritual Meal?

When it comes to the evidence for alms gifts, the identification of the *agape* (ἀγάπη, ⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ) as the Manichaean ritual meal is pivotal. It is either the keystone proving the practice of the daily ritual meal, or it reveals the ambiguity of everyday life language. From the first publications onward, a few scattered references to *agape* in the Kellis letters have been interpreted as evidence for the practice of the daily ritual meal. In the first edition, it was cautiously noted that "unfortunately, it is not explicit as to whether this is food offered to the elect, or distributed to the poor," and "if the *agape* is to be understood as the Manichaean ritual meal […] then those who partook of it must be elect."[86] If this latter interpretation is correct, it would offer strong evidence for regular moments of groupness. Unfortunately, none of the papyri explains what exactly the organization of the *agape* entailed.

The Greek term *agape*, literally meaning love, was used for a variety of ritual practices in Late Antiquity. Andrew McGowan examined the widespread use of the word and concludes that "we should probably stop speaking of 'the agape' as through there was an ancient consensus about it that we could use in clear absence of any modern one."[87] Instead, he argues, a "diversity of practices and terminologies, all of which share some relation to one another," is shown in ancient Christian literature and inscriptions.[88] During the first centuries of

I. Gardner, "P. Kellis I 67 Revisited," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 159 (2007): 223–28.

86 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 77n95; See also A. Alcock, "The Agape," *Vigiliae Christianae* 54, no. 2 (2000): 208–09; J.D. Dubois, "Les repas manichéens," in *Entre lignes de partage et territoires de passage: Les identités religieuses dans les mondes grec et romain*, ed. N. Belayche and S.C. Mimouni (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009), 110 and 115. Pedersen interprets the *agape* in Hom. 29.1–2 and all the Kellis passages as the Manichaean ritual meal. Pedersen, "Holy Meals," 1283.

87 A. McGowan, "Naming the Feast: The Agape and the Diversity of Early Christian Meals," *Studia Patristica* 30 (1997): 317–18.

88 McGowan, "Naming the Feast," 318; Finn, *Almsgiving*, 103–5.

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Christian literature, the *agape* designated a charitable meal used to support the poor.[89] In the third century, communal gatherings began to take place in the morning, and included a ritualized meal that was symbolic in character. These symbolic meals were led by the clergy, and the previously celebrated household banquets gradually became associated with heretics.[90] In the fourth and fifth century, the Eucharist became the central ritual of Christian communal gatherings. By that time, charity and communion with the poor were no longer expressed through a weekly *agape* meal (in the evening). Instead, the term that now connoted (brotherly) love, charity, and meals came to be used for a wide variety of charitable and alimentary practices. In the *Apophthegmata Patrum*, for example, "in charity" (δέδωκας αὐτῃ ἀγάπην) was used to describe charitable gifts to a widow.[91] A similar usage of the term *agape* is found in an Arabic biography of Shenoute, which narrates a story about a layman who dressed up as a beggar to see whether his *agape* gifts to the monastery were indeed distributed as alms to the poor.[92] Other Greek and Coptic papyri use the term *agape* for the gifts and meal associated with festivals for the martyrs in Oxyrhynchus (P.Oxy. LXVI 3864, fifth century), the festival of Apa Apollo

89 Tertullian used the phrase to describe the evening meal (otherwise in Latin *dilectio*) in which believers from all classes came together to eat. By contrasting these occasions with the banquets of Roman *collegia*, he stressed the charitable nature of the *agape* and its egalitarian meaning. Tertullian, *Bapt*. 9.2. J.P. Burns, R.M. Jensen, and G.W. Clarke, *Christianity in Roman Africa: The Development of Its Practices and Beliefs* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 234–5, 240–1, 251–2 and 287–90. A more fundamental discussion of the relation between the Eucharist and the *agape* is found in A. McGowan, "Rethinking Agape and Eucharist in Early North African Christianity," *Studia Liturgica* 34 (2004): 165–76; A. McGowan, *Ascetic Eucharists. Food and Drink in Early Christian Ritual Meals* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999). Earlier studies include B. Reicke, *Diakonie, Festfreude und Zelos in Verbindung mit der altchristlichen Agapenfeier* (Uppsala: Verlag, 1951); C. Donahue, "The Agape of the Hermits of Scete," *Studia Monastica* 1 (1959): 97–114; H. Lietzmann, *Mass and the Lord's Supper* (Leiden: Brill, 1979); A.G. Hamman, "De l'agape à la diaconie, en Afrique chrétienne," *Theologische Zeitschrift* 42 (1986): 241–21. Most of these studies have been summarized in R. Halterman Finger, *Of Widows and Meals: Communal Meals in the Book of Acts* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007).

90 Cyprian, *Ep*. 63.16.2–17.1, discussed in Burns, Jensen, and Clarke, *Christianity in Roman Africa*, 252. On the connection between the discourse of heresy and the household, see H.O. Maier, "Heresy, Households, and the Disciplining of Diversity," in *A People's History to Christianity. Late Ancient Christianity*, ed. V. Burrus (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 213–33.

91 *Apophthegmata patrum* 13.16. Blumell and Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus*, 666–67, no. 171.

92 Besa, *Vit. Shenoute*, 33–35 cited in Blumell and Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus*, 672–5, no. 173; López, *Shenoute of Atripe and the Uses of Poverty*, 65 noting that similar stories circulated about John the Almsgiver (*Life of John the Almsgiver*, 9).

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(SB X 10269, seventh century), and a meal associated with the burial and commemoration of martyrs and monks.[93] Coptic Manichaean liturgical and theological texts usually refer to the alms as "table" (ⲧⲣⲁⲡⲉⲍⲁ), "charitable offering" (ⲡⲣⲟⲥⲫⲟⲣⲁ), "donations" (ⲇⲱⲣⲟⲛ), or "alms offering" (ⲧⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲛⲁⲉ), but *agape* is also used in some passages related to Manichaean commemoration rituals (see chapter 6). In the Manichaean *Homilies*, the term *agape* is associated with specific community members:

> the gifts [that] have been distributed and been [–] among the friends of the *agape* (ⲛ̄ϣⲃⲉ̣[ⲣⲉ] ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ ⲧⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ)! Behold, the sects have been smitten and destroyed. Behold, the alms (ⲧⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲛⲁⲉ) are appointed with those who give them.[94]

Whether the "friends of the agape" were the elect (those who received the gifts) or the catechumens ("those who give them [i.e. the alms gifts]," ⲛⲉⲧ[ϯ ⲙ̄]ⲙⲁⲥ) remains in question.[95] At the same time, it is clear that Manichaeans associated *agape* with alms gifts.

Agape is mentioned six times in the Coptic letters and business accounts from Kellis (see Table 12), and fifteen times in the agricultural account book (KAB). In all instances, the term relates to food gifts, in particular oil, wheat,

93 According to Arietta Papaconstantinou, the bags mentioned in letter P.Oxy. LXVI, 3864 were to be delivered in exchange for goods or services for the benefit of the festival at Oxyrhynchus. A. Papaconstantinou, "L'agapè des martyrs: P.Oxy. LVI 3864," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 92 (1992): 241–42. See the text of SB X 10269 and the discussion by H.C. Youtie, "P.Yale Inv. 177," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 16 (1975): 259–64; T. Vivian, "Monks, Middle Egypt, and Metanoia: The Life of Phib by Papohe the Steward (Translation and Introduction)," *Journal of Early Christian History* 7, no. 4 (1999): 554. Papyri from the monastery of Apa Apollo also attest to the celebration of this festival, as they order wine for the *agape* of Apa Phib (ⲁⲕⲁⲡⲏ ⲁⲡⲁ ⲫⲓ̈ⲃ), cited and discussed in Clackson, *Coptic and Greek Texts*, 6, 12. In Rome, for example, the Christian inscriptions under the San Sebastiano include the words "in agape." S. Diefenbach, *Römische Erinnerungsräume. Heiligenmemoria und kollektive Identitäten im Rom des 3. bis 5. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 54–55. The catacomb painting is no longer understood as an *agape* meal, but broader in the context of Roman funerary meals. The graffiti with the phrases Agape and Irene could have been names instead of similar wishes for peace and love, see R.M. Jensen, *Understanding Early Christian Art* (London: Routledge, 2000), 53–4.

94 ⲁⲩⲥⲱⲣ ⲙ̄ⲙⲉⲓⲗ̣ⲓⲟⲛ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ [ⲁ]ⲩ ..[ⲟ]ⲩ ϩⲛ̄ⲛ̄ϣⲃⲉ̣[ⲣⲉ] ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ ⲧⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ: ⲉⲓⲥ ⲛ̄ⲇⲟⲅⲙⲁ ⲁⲩϣϭⲁϭⲉ ⲁ[ⲩⲕⲁ]ⲧⲁⲗⲩⲉ· ⲉⲓⲥ ⲧⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲛⲁⲉ ⲁⲥⲧⲱϣ ⲙⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲧ[ϯ ⲙ̄]ⲙⲁⲥ Hom. 29.1–4.

95 Discussion at, Pedersen, *Studies*, 304–5, following Merkelbach's interpretation of love (ⲧⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ) in 2 PsB. 171.25–173.10 as the ritual meal rather than the virtue of love. R. Merkelbach, *Mani und Sein Religionssystem* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1986), 57–8; See A. Villey, *Psaumes des errants: Écrits manichéens du Fayyūm* (Paris: Cerf, 1994), 122–3 and 401–7 on this particular psalm.

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olives, grapes, lentils, and lupin seeds, but none of the authors makes a Manichaean context explicit. The interpretation that recognizes these donations as Manichaean alms gifts, therefore, mostly rests on the Manichaean repertoire used in Orion's letters, and a prioritization of systematic reconstructions of Manichaean doctrine and behavioral norms.[96]

Zooming in on the specifics, what did Orion do with the *agape*? In P.Kellis v Copt. 17, Orion writes to Hor that he has received oil from Sabes and stored it somewhere, saying, "we take in much oil for the *agape*, in that we are many, and they consume much oil."[97] After discussing some of the other business arrangements, Orion returns to the topic and promises to "make the *agape* for the…."[98] In another letter to Hor, Orion refers to a similar situation in which he received oil from Raz, and left it (somewhere, with someone?) "for the *agape*, like you said." In both cases, he takes full personal responsibility: "Do not bother (?) yourself with the *agape*. I will do it rejoicing," and he promises to send "his share" (ⲡϥⲙⲉⲣⲟⲥ) to brother Pakous, who is harvesting outside the village.[99] Together, the two letters convey the impression that Orion acted as an intermediary, bringing oil and wheat from individuals (Raz, Sabes) to a storage location elsewhere in the oasis, where portions could be distributed to other brothers. It is clear that the oil and wheat were meant to be consumed by others, who are referred to as "they" in P.Kellis v Copt. 17, but Orion also writes in the first person plural, making it difficult to understand what his own role was.[100] The matter-of-fact tone of the letter suggests that Orion and Hor were more frequently in touch about the practical considerations of the *agape*. Since Orion uses Manichaean designators such as "child of righteousness" and "good limb of the Light Mind" for Hor, it is tempting to see them as cooperating in

96 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, CDT1, 70–71, 77. Pedersen, "Holy Meals," 1283 states "The reason is that the Manichaeans' *agape* cannot have concerned distribution of food to the poor in general; Manichaeans were only allowed to give alms to the voluntary poor, i.e. the elect, but not the economic poor."

97 ⲉⲡⲓⲇⲏ ϣⲁⲛϫⲓ ϩⲁϩ ⲛ̄ⲛⲏϩ ⲁϩⲟ̣ⲩ̣ⲛ ⲁⲧⲁⲅⲁ̣ⲡ̣ⲏ ϫⲉ ⲧ̣ⲛ̄ⲁϣ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲥⲉⲟⲩⲱⲙ ϩⲁϩ ⲛ̄ⲛⲏϩ. P.Kellis v Copt. 17.22–25. Dubois's understanding of the bronze vessel in P.Kellis v Copt. 47 as "l'existence d'un chaudron ou d'une poêle de bronze servant à la cuisson ou la friture. On peut donc deviner quelques aspects des pratiques culinaires des manichéens" is sheer speculation. Dubois, "Les repas manichéens," 109.

98 ϯⲛⲁⲣ̄ ⲧⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ ⲁⲛⲉ̣ⲡ̣. . . . . P.Kellis v Copt. 17.34.

99 ⲙⲡⲣ̄ⲣ̣ⲥ̣ⲓ̣ⲥ̣ⲧⲁ ⲛⲉ̣ⲕ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲧⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ ϯⲛⲁⲉⲥ ⲁϊⲣⲉϣⲉ "Do not bother (?) about the *agape*. I will do it, rejoicing." P.Kellis v Copt. 15.23–24. ϯⲛⲁϫⲟⲩ ⲡϥⲙⲉⲣⲟⲥ ⲛⲉϥ ⲁⲣⲏⲥ "I will send his share south to him." P.Kellis v Copt. 15.26–27.

100 "Since *we* take in much oil for the *agape*, in that *we* are many, and *they* consume much oil." ⲉⲡⲓⲇⲏ ϣⲁⲛϫⲓ ϩⲁϩ ⲛ̄ⲛⲏϩ ⲁϩⲟ̣ⲩ̣ⲛ ⲁⲧⲁⲅⲁ̣ⲡ̣ⲏ ϫⲉ ⲧ̣ⲛ̄ⲁϣ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲥⲉⲟⲩⲱⲙ ϩⲁϩ ⲛ̄ⲛⲏϩ. P.Kellis v Copt. 17.22–25.

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the long distance almsgiving process on behalf of the catechumens in Kellis.[101] Still, the two other passages referring to *agape* point in another direction. Their immediate context in business accounts listing the food as expenses is not conducive to a Manichaean framing. In one passage, the *agape* is requested as a gift, suggesting a non-Manichaean interpretation: "[T]he lentils and lupin seeds: make them as an *agape* for me."[102] The other account matter-of-factly lists "the *agape* of Theodora: she has given a *maje* of olives and a half *maje* of grapes."[103] No further information about additional redistribution is included, making these gifts the responsibility of a single individual only.

TABLE 12 References to *agape* in the Coptic personal letters

Text no.	Commodities	Sequence	Actors	Rules structuring behavior
P.Kellis v Copt. 15.14	Oil, wheat (about 720 T for 6 *maje* wheat).[a]	Orion received from Raz and left it somewhere (?) on instruction from Hor.	Orion, Raz, Hor; Raz acts as middleman, transferring commodities.	Expensive.
P.Kellis v Copt. 15.23	?	His "share" is sent to Pakous "if he does not come by that day."	Orion, Pakous.	Time-specific meal? Orion takes responsibility for specific task of sending.

101 Pedersen, "Holy Meals," 1283; Teigen, *The Manichaean Church in Kellis*, 240–43.

102 ⲛⲁⲣϣⲓ̣ⲛ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛⲧⲁⲣⲙⲟⲩⲥ ⲁⲣⲓⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲁⲕⲁⲡⲏ ϩⲁⲣⲁⲉⲓ P.Kellis v Copt. 47.10–11. This alternative spelling of ⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ is common, see H. Förster, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den koptischen dokumentarischen Texten* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2002), 3–5.

103 ⲧ̀ⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ ⲛ̄ⲑⲉⲟⲇⲱⲣⲁ ϩⲥ̀ϯ ⲟⲩⲙⲁϫ̀ ϫⲁⲓⲧ̀ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲝ ⲙⲁϫ̀ ⲉⲗⲁⲗⲉ "The agape of Theodora: She has given a *maje* of olives and a half *maje* of grapes." P.Kellis v Copt. 44.12.

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TABLE 12 References to *agape* in the Coptic personal letters (*cont.*)

Text no.	Commodities	Sequence	Actors	Rules structuring behavior
P.Kellis v Copt. 17.18	Oil (if an *agon* is half a *chous*, the price would be between 800 to 1000 T/*agon*).[b]	*Agon* of oil, received by Orion, (?) and he left a portion somewhere on instruction of Hor. Idem with an *agon* of oil Orion received from Sabes, he also left it somewhere.	Orion, Hor, Sabes, Lautine, Timotheos. Sabes sent a *Solidus* (*holokottinos*) together with the oil.	Explicitly stated that "we take much oil for the agape, in that we are many, and they consume much oil."
P.Kellis v Copt. 17.33	?	Orion will make the agape for … (someone?)	Orion.	Personal responsibility of Orion.
P.Kellis v Copt. 44.12	*Maje* of olives and half a *maje* of grapes.	Theodora has given it (to Tehat? Why recorded here?)	Theodora.	Personal responsibility of Theodora.
P.Kellis v Copt. 47.10	Lentils and lupin seeds.	Author requests it?	Tehat?	It can be requested.

a Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 144; Bagnall, *KAB*, 47–48 on *maje* and page 52 on the price of wheat.

b Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 64 and 61.

A comparison with the *agape* gifts in the KAB can contribute to our understanding of *agape*'s meaning in the village of Kellis. The monthly expenditures listed in the accounts of a large estate include frequent *agape* gifts, recorded, although inconsistently, in the first four months of the year (see Table 13). These expenses are strictly related to agricultural products like wheat, wine, or cheese, just like the *agape* gifts in the Coptic letters, in which oil seems to take a central position. The editor of the account book suggests that "the usage in the KAB is certainly compatible with the view

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that these offerings were intended for use in a communal meal."[104] This communal meal might have been organized with regularity in the first couple of months of the year, or as an annual event that took place after the first four months. As in the Coptic accounts, the *agape* was the result of individual private donations. The KAB lists *agape* in association with specific women: "for alms of That" (Eἰς ἀγάπη θατ KAB 106) and "for alms of Tanoup" (Eἰς ἀγάπη Τανουπ KAB 940), and follows a simple format similar to the "*agape* of Theodora" listed in one of the earlier mentioned business accounts.[105]

TABLE 13 *Agape* gifts in the KAB per month as related to modern calendar[a]

Month	Egyptian calendar	Indication modern calendar	List of gifts
1	Thoth 1	August 29	*Agape* gifts (KAB 88, 186, 749)
2	Paophi 1	September 28	*Agape* gifts (KAB 101, 103, 755, 1562)
3	Hathyr 1	October 28	*Agape* gifts (KAB 448, 940, 1548, 1564)
4	Choiak 1	November 27	*Agape* gifts (KAB 119)
5	Tybi 1	December 22	–
6	Mecheir 1	January 26	–
7	Phamenoth 1	February 25	(Death Mani, month of Adar)[b]
8	Pharmouthi 1	March 27	*Agape* gifts (KAB 1525) & Easter (KAB 1717)
9	Pachon 1	April 26	–
10	Pauni 1	May 26	–
11	Epeiph 1	June 25	–
12	Mesore 1	July 25	–
–	Intercalendar days	August 24–28	–

a Indication from J. Rowlandson, ed., *Women & Society in Greek & Roman Egypt. A Sourcebook* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), xv. I am following Bagnall's indication of the dates. Bagnall, *KAB*, 82. The *agape* of KAB 106 and 116 is not associated with a specific date.

b Listed as the 4th of *Phamenoth* in 2 PsB. 17.26 and 18.7.

104 Bagnall, *KAB*, 84.

105 The identification of the former with Tehat in the Coptic accounts is considered "stretching the evidence" by the editors of the Coptic papyri. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 46.

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The regular occurrence of the *agape* gifts and their association with individual donors in the KAB and the Coptic papyri may support an alternative interpretation that does not require one to categorize Orion's *agape* gifts (generally considered part of a Manichaean meal or redistribution system) differently from those in the KAB (generally considered non-Manichaean gifts because they included cheese and wine, 116, 448, 940). All instances could have been part of a process of charitable redistribution, in which individuals donated part of the harvest, collected it, and gave it in preparation for Easter. The KAB explicitly allocates one of the *agape* gifts in the same month as the Easter arrangements (called the "festival of Parmouthi," ἑορτὴ Φαρμοῦθι, KAB 1717).[106] Church canons, such as the fourth-century canons of Athanasius, witness that Easter was supposed to be the day *par excellence* for almsgiving.[107] The clustering of the *agape* gifts in the first four months of the year, a period closer to the harvest season than to Easter, may reflect the collection and storage of gifts before the festival, while the months between Choiak and Easter correlate with a sober lent season.[108] The arrangements for collecting Pakous's share, which must be sent south of where he is harvesting "if he does not come by that day" (P.Kellis V Copt. 15.27), suggest that there was a time frame for delivering the food (on the celebration of Easter in Kellis, see chapter 5). Did Pakous's share have to arrive in time for the celebrations in Kellis?

Conclusions

Manichaeans in Kellis were familiar with almsgiving. They received fundraising letters from the elect, and some families and individuals actively supported these itinerant fathers from a distance. The papyri, however, also show the ambiguity of gift-giving within a village setting. Rather than strictly following a Manichaean ideology of almsgiving, it seems like some of the interactions between catechumens and elect may have had commercial aspects to

106 This is a more common phrase for Easter in Coptic, see J. Drescher, "The Coptic Dictionary: Additions and Corrections," *Bulletin de la société d'archéologie copte* 16 (1961–62): 288. Bagnall suggests that the Easter celebration of either *Pharmouthi* 9 in the year 364 CE or those of *Pharmouthi* 26 in the year 379 CE was meant. Bagnall, *KAB*, 84.

107 Finn, *Almsgiving*, 79.

108 J. Magnusson, "Mat och Manikeism," in *Religion och Bibel* ed. L. Roos (Uppsala: Nathan Söderblomsällskapet, 2018), 71–95. On the archaeology of tables for Christian ritual meals, see K. Innemée, "The Lord's Table, Refrigerium, Eucharist, Agapè, and Tables for Ritual Meals in Al-Bagawat and in Monasteries," in *Christianity and Monasticism in Alexandria and the Egyptian Deserts*, ed. G. Gabra and H.N. Takla. (New York: American University in Cairo Press, 2020), 281–97.

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it. The way one observes these practices in the papyri is less one-dimensional than the practices espoused in Manichaean ideology; they are not explicitly focused on almsgiving. Frequently, economic interactions were not spelled out, and gifts were often recorded without any additional information. The group-specific Manichaean rationales for giving to the elect are never manifest in papyrus letters, apart from the religious framing of the elect's requests.[109] Rather than identifying ambiguous gift-giving situations with Manichaean gift exchange, one ought to understand these interactions primarily in the context of everyday domestic support, economic interaction, and charitable distribution, all key ingredients of informal networks of care, which, according to Peregrine Horden, were typically "operating *between*, at least as much as *within*, dwellings."[110] Indeed, the papyri show that the inhabitants of Kellis, like most ancient individuals, employed a broad spectrum of resources that could be called upon in need. If giving demarcated belonging, the boundaries were not strictly drawn along religious differentiations.

The geographical setting of Kellis fundamentally affected gift-exchange, allowing for a more pronounced lay participation when the elect were absent from the village. Without their ascetic religious specialists, the families in Kellis were left with the elect's letters and the assurance of their prayers. Alms were requested and given through a long-distance system of letters and gifts, which religious function is almost impossible to reconstruct with certainty. As a consequence, elect became incorporated into a domestic network of support and participated in long-distance economic interactions with family members, neighbors, and Manichaean catechumens. Rather than holding a daily centralized role in the religious lives of the families in Kellis, the itinerant Manichaean elect, known as vehicles of salvation, played a limited role. As BeDuhn rightly points out, "those left behind shifted to alternative modes of activity by which they maintained their Manichaean identity and practice. Certain practices were suspended without an elect present," whereby the "local cell became the sustainers of their own identification with the elusive world Manichaean organization."[111] This reconstruction of Manichaean life in Kellis is removed from Manichaean ideology found in the *Kephalaia* and critiqued by heresiologists like Augustine. Without daily ritual meals, the nature of almsgiving changed, maybe even to the extent that the exchange of gifts between catechumens were viewed with cosmic significance.

109 Rebillard, *Christians and their Many Identities*, 91.
110 Horden, "Household Care and Informal Networks," 39.
111 BeDuhn, "The Domestic Setting," 266.

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CHAPTER 5

The Deacon's Practice: Manichaean Gatherings with Prayer and Psalm Singing

> They said … a deacon who was turned away from there, the one who … while he was with me, I used to argue with him daily. Because during his practice he would be angry with me saying: "what do you have against me?"
>
> MAKARIOS TO MATTHAIOS[1]

Makarios comes across as a difficult person. His letters are filled with complaints, revealing conflicts with his wife and, in one instance, with a deacon. For some reason, he informed his family in the oasis of a conflict that he had on a "daily" (ⲙ̄ⲙⲏⲛⲉ) basis with an otherwise unidentified deacon. What the argument was about is unknown. In fact, it is even unclear whether the conflict arose over the deacon's religious practice or over something else that happened *during* his "practice" (ⲙⲉⲗⲉⲧⲁ). Despite the lack of contextual information, this passage points to the existence of an ecclesiastical structure and communal gatherings. The *Kephalaia* offers another glimpse into Manichaean communal gatherings. In one of the chapters, a member of the elect recalls presiding over a service with fifty elect. In his leadership role, he watched over their daily fasting, which brought into existence a large number of angels (1 Keph. 81). As in Makarios's letter, this passage presupposes a communal gathering, in this case solely (?) with elect on "the Lord's day" (i.e., Sunday). In a third text, situated around the same time, Augustine made fun of a failed attempt at communal Manichaean living. He narrates that a monastic initiative in the city of Rome failed because the elect could not keep the Manichaean rule of life; conflict

1 ⲡⲁϫⲉⲩ [.....] ⲟⲩⲇⲓⲁⲕⲱⲛ ⲉϩⲁⲩⲡⲁⲛⲉϥ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲙ̄ⲙⲟ ⲡⲉⲧⲁϥϩⲁ̣[..... ⲉ]ϥϩⲁⲧⲏⲓ ⲛⲉϣⲁⲓⲙⲓϣⲉ ⲛⲙ̄ⲙⲉϥ ⲙ̄ⲙⲏⲛⲉ ϫⲉ ϩⲙ [ⲡⲧⲣⲉϥⲙⲉ]ⲗⲉⲧⲁ ϣⲁϥⲃⲱⲗ̄ⲕ ⲁⲣⲁⲉⲓ ϫⲉ ⲁϩⲣⲁⲕ ⲛⲙ̄ⲙⲁ̣ⲓ̣. P.Kellis v Copt. 19.47–51. (slightly modified translation). The interpretation and translation of this passage is difficult. I take ϩⲙ [ⲡⲧⲣⲉϥⲙⲉ]ⲗⲉⲧⲁ to mean "during his practice." Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 165.

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broke out among them, exposing their most horrible behavior for all to see.[2] In contrast to the previous two situations, Augustine's story presupposes that elect traveled or lived scattered throughout the city until they moved together into one house, which made their otherwise hidden lax attitude visible to their lay supporters.

How frequently did Manichaeans gather? The Kellis texts highlight a *family religion group style* associated with itinerant Manichaean elect. None of the personal letters informs us explicitly about regular gatherings with the elect, nor do they elaborate about communal gatherings with other catechumens, what we will call a *congregational group style* – otherwise known as "small group religion."[3] Despite this silence, there is ample reason to believe that communal gatherings with praying and psalm singing took place, and constituted marked moments in time, in which the participating Kellites understood themselves in Manichaean terms. The wooden boards and papyri containing liturgical texts, found in close association with the personal letters, provide another piece to the puzzle. They point to specific moments of Manichaeanness. Communal singing of psalms, in particular, would have stimulated a fuller identification with the Manichaean community, as sociologists have concluded that "the enhancement of experience which ritual offers cognitively and particularly emotionally, plays an important role in the internalization of identification."[4] One could say that these shared communal actions are "embodied expressions of identity" in song, speech, and bodily movements like prostration.[5] Taking part in collective gatherings created and sustained individual affiliation with the imagined community and offered moments of intensified collective belonging and emotional arousal that contributed to the rise of a distinct Manichaean group. Such moments, on the other hand, may also have resulted in increasing tension, conflict, and disruption of everyday religious life, as illustrated by Makarios's conflict with the deacon and Augustine's polemical report on the elects' inability to live together peacefully under the watchful eyes of catechumens. This chapter, therefore, examines the Kellis papyri and Coptic Manichaica to detect the occurrences, frequency, location, and potential impact of Manichaean communal gatherings in the Oasis.

2 The story if found in Augustine, *Mor. Manich.* 10.74, translation in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 36.

3 R. Gordon, "Projects, Performance and Charisma: Managing Small Religious Groups in the Roman Empire," in *Beyond Priesthood: Religious Entrepreneurs and Innovators in the Roman Empire*, ed. R.L. Gordon, G. Petridou and J. Rüpke (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), 277–316.

4 R. Jenkins, *Social Identity*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2008), 150–1.

5 M. Tellbe, "Identity and Prayer," in *Early Christian Prayer and Identity Formation*, ed. R. Hvalvik and K.O. Sandnes (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 19 building on the work of Rappaport.

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Manichaean Communal Gatherings

Regular communal gatherings with people who shared religious beliefs and practices were not the norm in antiquity. Most religious practices took place within the comfort of one's own household, or were performed by ritual specialists in the presence of a limited audience.[6] A congregational group style – so common nowadays – was only practiced by Jews, Christians, Greco-Roman associations, and within some of the so-called elective cults associated with Isis or Mithras. The academic analysis of some of these group-specific religions has frequently focused on the interaction between preachers and their audience as one of the main mechanisms of group formation, although many have questioned the depth of doctrinal transmission through sermons.[7] During regular meetings with a small local community, preaching may have reinforced behavioral norms, utopian and universal religious claims, and the notion of belonging to an imagined transregional community, but the audience's response was sometimes limited at best.[8]

In fact, some scholars argue that only very few individuals participated regularly in communal religious gatherings. Ramsey MacMullen not only argues that the majority of ancient individuals would not have understood a Christian sermon because of its literary and rhetorical nature, but also that they could not have regularly attended weekly gatherings: church buildings were too small to include more than five percent of the population.[9] Instead, people gathered at a myriad of other events, often outside (for example, at graveyards and tombs of saints). Extant liturgical documents, therefore, only shed light on a small number of occasions for communal get-togethers.

The limited evidence for communal gatherings in Kellis, which matches what has been discovered in Manichaean texts from all over the ancient world, has to be read in light of the double uncertainty about religious participation

6 Zoroastrians, likewise, gathered as a family, or for specific rituals, but not regularly as a wider community, with the exception of some seasonal festivals (the *Gahambar*). A.F. de Jong, "Sub Specie Maiestatis: Reflections on Sasanian Court Rituals," in *Zoroastrian Rituals in Context*, ed. M. Stausberg (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 345–65.

7 I. Sandwell, *Religious Identity in Late Antiquity: Greeks, Jews and Christians in Antioch* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 13–16.

8 The comparison with ancient Christianity is only of limited use, as there exist widely divergent opinions on the frequency and nature of Christian gatherings. G. Rouwhorst, "The Reading of Scripture in Early Christian Liturgy," in *What Athens Has to Do with Jerusalem: Essays on Classical, Jewish, and Early Christian Art and Archaeology in Honor of Gideon Foerster*, ed. L.C. Rutgers (Leuven: Peeters, 2002), 305–31.

9 R. MacMullen, "The Preacher's Audience (AD 350–400)," *Journal of Theological Studies* 40, no. 2 (1989): 503–11; MacMullen, *The Second Church*.

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and its impact. The absence of full reflection on the content and frequency of Manichaean gatherings in the Roman Empire, also, asks for a careful approach, in which the liturgical documents from Egypt are analyzed in accordance with what is known from the broader Manichaean tradition, without harmonizing evidence from widely diverse regions and periods. Rather than assuming that Manichaeans in Kellis held weekly church services and followed the eastern Manichaean calendar, we will look at the – sometimes flimsy – evidence for four types of Manichaean communal gatherings: occasional gatherings, daily rituals, weekly services, and annual celebrations.[10] While regular participation in these events would have fundamentally shaped a community, there is very little reason to believe that they characterized the daily lives of all Manichaean families in Kellis.

Occasional Gatherings

Manichaean elect and catechumens interacted incidentally in various situations. Some of these *Occasional* interactions may have been intense, as for example, when catechumens traveled with the elect. On such occasions, profound interaction about distinctly Manichaean topics and practices would have been the norm. We can safely assume that they would have prayed together, held their confession rituals, and participated in almsgiving and the ritual meal. Unfortunately, extant sources shed very little light on the interactions between catechumens and elect while traveling. From Makarios's family, we learn that the itinerant religious leaders traveled with lay followers to train them for ecclesiastical duties such as reading in various languages. This may have been important for the ongoing translation of Manichaean texts, or for proselytizing – Christian authors frequently warned against the missionary practices of Manichaeans.[11] Such aims and practices are, however, invisible in the Greek and Coptic Manichaean texts, apart from the hagiographical stories about Mani and his first generation of disciples. Piene's reading "in every church" (P.Kellis V Copt. 25.46) and Matthaios's scribal practice

10 On the difference between the eastern calendar and Egyptian Manichaeism, see G. Wurst, *Das Bemafest der ägyptischen Manichäer* (Altenberge: Oros Verlag, 1995), 33. I will refrain from giving extensive parallels from earliest Christian history. A general summary is found in V.A. Alikin, *The Earliest History of the Christian Gathering* (Brill: Leiden, 2010). For gatherings and prayer-times in the monastic literature from Egypt, see A. Müller, "The Cult in the Cell," *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 18–19, no. 1 (2017): 187–200; C. Osiek, "The Self-Defining Praxis of the Developing *Ecclesia*," in *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, ed. M.M. Mitchell and F.M. Young (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 274–92.

11 A missionary purpose is taken for granted in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 75; Mirecki, "Scribal Magic," 143–4.

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(chapter 7) point to certain religious activities, but as much as we would have liked Matthaios and Piene to tell us more intimately about the purpose of their trips with the Teacher and the interactions they had with elect like Apa Lysimachos, the details escape us.

Religious gatherings at deathbeds, for funerals, and in commemoration of the departed took place throughout the Manichaean world. The next chapter will examine the Kellis evidence for rituals surrounding death, as Matthaios writes about members of the elect who should have gathered around the body of his "great mother" (P.Kellis V Copt. 25.52). This gathering was either a ritual to support her in her final hours, or a commemoration ritual to aid the journey of her soul through the heavenly spheres. Several of the psalms found in Kellis give a glimpse into the liturgy of the commemoration, though almost nothing is known about actual life-cycle rituals such as burials. Who participated in commemoration rituals and how frequently they were performed is almost entirely unknown (see chapter 6).

A similar lack of situational information hampers the interpretation of spells, amulets, and horoscopes. Did the family gather for a domestic ritual? Did individuals hire a religious specialist to visit them? If so, how did the religious repertoire that included celestial power, angels, and traditional Egyptian deities relate to their Manichaean beliefs and practices? Since most of the texts themselves do not refer to Manichaean notions, they probably derived from religious occasions with rituals aimed at the health and protection of the family, regardless of the group-specific repertoire(s). The texts did not set these rituals apart from similar religious practices performed by the neighbors. A Greek wooden board found in House 3 illustrates the ambiguity between Manichaean practices and other religious traditions, and shows possible Manichaean adaptations of a Christian liturgical text (P.Kellis I Gr. 88). Initially classified as an amulet, the text has been reconsidered as a prayer for the sick because of its almost exact parallel with the liturgical prayers of P.Barc 155.9–156.5.[12] It appears that the prayer was recited with the laying on of hands, while participants addressed the "eternal God" (θεὸς αἰ̣ώνιος) who is "our savior and refuge and helper of our assistance."[13] Without any indication of a specifically Manichaean repertoire, the prayer asks God to keep "away from

12 Römer, Daniel, and Worp, "Das Gebet zur Handauflegung". It is designated P.Monts.Roca inv. 155b.19–156a.5 in A. Maravela, "Christians Praying in a Graeco-Egyptian Context: Intimations of Christian Identity in Greek Papyrus Prayers," in *Early Christian Prayer and Identity Formation*, ed. R. Hvalvik and K.O. Sandnes (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 291–323.

13 ὁ σωτὴρ ἡμῶν καὶ καταφυγὴ καὶ β⟨ο⟩ηθ⟨ὸς⟩ τῆς ἀντιλήμψεως ἡμῶν P.Kellis I Gr. 88.20–23.

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him every disease and every infirmity and every spirit of illness."[14] The only indication of Manichaean usage is the omission of Jesus's name in the doxology at the end of this version of the text, which Anastasia Maravela attributes to Manichaeism's diminishment of Jesus's name-giving, identity-creating role.[15] This Manichaean usage of this prayer was bolstered by the discovery of a wooden board with Manichaean psalms (T.Kellis II Copt. 6), fragments of Syriac papyri (P.Kellis II Syr. 1), and the personal letters of Pamour's family at the exact same find location. The earlier mentioned amulets associated with Pamour's family (e.g. P.Kellis I Gr. 85ab) are an important reminder that the Manichaeans of Kellis dabbled in a wider set of religious practices.

Daily Rituals

The details of daily communal gatherings are known through extensive regulations in documents from the eastern and western Manichaean tradition. They describe the daily obligation to give alms for the ritual meal, to take four or seven moments of prayer,[16] and to observe frequent fasting. In the *Kephalaia*'s instructions for perfect catechumens, this *daily* observance is emphasized, including their daily communion with the elect:

> The hours of prayer are kept by him; he observes them and comes daily to prayer. Hour by hour and day by day, all these hours of prayer will [...] his fasting, and his alms that he gives on every day of the year. The alms will be counted [...] to his good, and the fasting that he has performed, and

14 Χώρισον ἀπ' αὐτοῦ πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ πᾶσαν μαλακίαν καὶ πὰν πν(εῦμ)α ἀσθενίας P.Kellis I Gr. 88.11–14. Worp, *GPK1*, 220–22.

15 Maravela, "Christians Praying," 303; Bruyn, *Making Amulets Christian*, 231. The laying on of hands is described as one of the five mysteries of Manichaean practice (1 Keph. 9, 37.28–42.23). Mani was known as a doctor, and his disciples were portrayed as healers through laying on of hands. C. Römer, "Mani, der neue Urmensch. Eine neue Interpretation der P. 36 des Kölner Mani-Kodex," in *Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis: Atti del simposio internazionale*, ed. L. Cirillo and A. Roselli (Cosenza: Marra Editore, 1986), 333–44; Coyle, "Hands and Imposition of Hands in Manichaeism," 89–99.

16 Arabic sources list four moments of prayer (for the catechumens, seven for the elect), of which the last must have coincided with the meal ritual. BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 39, 52, 129, 139–40, 158. At page 143 he concludes: "Although some sources suggest that Auditors delivered foods to the ritual locale at their convenience throughout the day, and did not remain for the ceremony (e.g., M 77), the majority of evidence points to the presence of Auditors just before the meal itself, at the time corresponding to their last obligatory prayer period of the day." Greek and Middle Persian sources only mention three moments of prayer for catechumens (see below on the daily prayers). F. de Blois, "The Manichaean Daily Prayers," in *Studia Manichaica IV*, ed. R.E. Emmerick, W. Sundermann, and P. Zieme (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000), 49–54.

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> the garment that he has put upon the saints. A daily communion. And they fellowship with them in their fasting and their good.[17]

When daily observance of various ritual moments characterized the lives of Manichaean catechumens, there was a need for time management. Iris Colditz highlights the threefold division of a Manichaean day in various Manichaean texts: one segment of time for government duties, a second for earning one's living, and a third for service to the elect.[18] We do not know how widespread this tripartite schedule was. Most of Colditz's examples stem from Middle Persian, Parthian, and Sogdian texts, but the existence of such traditions and systematizations suggests that in some regions, the lives of catechumens were highly defined by Manichaeanness – or thought of as highly religious.

In Kellis, the practice of regular almsgiving for a daily ritual meal was adapted to the social and geographical circumstances of the oasis: it became organized over a distance. The prayers, on the other hand, took place in the village itself. A single wooden tablet, found in the backyard of House 3, has proven to be one of the most important discoveries for the history of Manichaeism.[19] While it was first published as the *Prayer of the Emanations* (P.Kellis VI Gr. 98) and its Manichaean nature was contested, it has now been recognized as the text of the daily Manichaean prayers.[20] In fact, parallel versions in Arabic, Middle

17 ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲩⲛϣⲗⲏⲗ ϫⲁⲁⲛϥ̄ ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲟⲧϥ̄ ϥⲡⲁⲣⲁⲧ̣[ⲏⲣ]ⲏ̣ ⲁⲣⲁⲩ ϥⲛⲏⲩ ⲁⲡϣⲗⲏⲗ ⲙ̄ⲙⲏⲛⲉ ⲕⲁ ⲧⲟⲩⲛⲟⲩ ⲟⲩⲛ[ⲟⲩ] ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ϩⲟⲟⲩⲉ ϩⲟⲟⲩⲉ ⲛⲓⲟⲩⲛⲁⲩⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲛ̄[ϣⲗ]ⲏⲗ ⲥⲉⲛⲁ .. ⲟⲩⲁⲕ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉϥⲛⲏⲥⲧⲓⲁ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲧⲉϥⲙⲛⲧⲛ̣[ⲁⲉ ⲉⲧϥ]ϯ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲥ ϩ[ⲛ̄] ⲛ̄ϩⲟⲟⲩⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲛⲧⲣⲁⲙⲡⲉ ⲥⲉⲛ[ⲁϣ]ⲡ [ⲛⲙⲙ]ⲛ̄ⲧⲛⲁⲉ … ⲓϫⲛ̄ ⲛⲉϥⲁⲅⲁⲑⲟⲛ ⲧⲛⲏⲥⲧⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲁϥⲉⲉⲥ ⲧϩ[ⲃ]ⲥⲱ ⲉⲧⲁϥⲧⲉⲉⲥ ϩⲓϫⲱⲩ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ ⲟⲩⲕⲟⲓⲛⲱⲛⲓⲁ ⲙⲙⲏⲛⲉ ⲛⲥⲉⲕⲟⲓⲛⲱⲛⲏ ⲛⲉⲙⲉⲩ ⲛ̄ϩⲏⲧⲥ̄ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧⲟⲩⲛⲏⲥⲧⲓⲁ ⲙ̄ⲛ ⲡⲟ̣ⲩⲁ̣ⲅ̣[ⲁⲑⲟ]ⲛ̣. 1 Keph. 91, 233.12–19.

18 Colditz, "Manichaean Time-Management," 87 citing 2 PsB. 222.5–10 and similar texts from the Eastern tradition (such as the Sogdian text M135,39–63, for which she cites Zoroastrian parallels).

19 Bermejo-Rubio, "'I Worship and Glorify'," 253.

20 First publication in G. Jenkins, "The Prayer of the Emanations in Greek from Kellis (T.Kellis 22)," *Le Muséon* 108 (1995): 243–63. The Manichaean nature of the prayer was contested in A. Khosroyev, "Zu einem manichäischen (?) Gebet," in *Il manicheismo: nuove prospettive della ricerca*, ed. A. van Tongerloo and L. Cirillo (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), 203–22. Rebuttal in Gardner, *KLT2*, 112–15; F. Bermejo-Rubio, "Further Remarks on the Manichaean Nature of ΕΥΧΗ ΤΩΝ ΠΡΟΒΟΛΩΝ (P.Kell.Gr. 98)," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 168 (2009): 221–38. The identification of this text in other languages is more recent. The text is now discussed in its proper context in Gardner, "Manichaean Ritual Practice at Ancient Kellis," 245–62; I. Gardner, "'With a Pure Heart and a Truthful Tongue': The Recovery of the Text of the Manichaean Daily Prayers," *Journal of Late Antiquity* 4, no. 1 (2011): 79–99. I will follow Gardner's reconstruction in these next paragraphs. The Iranian texts are published in D. Durkin-Meisterernst and E. Morano, eds., *Mani's Psalms. Middle Persian, Parthian and Sogdian Texts in the Turfan Collection* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), §360–9.

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Persian, Parthian, and Sogdian have established the Manichaean nature of this prayer beyond doubt, attesting to strong transregional Manichaean traditions.[21] The inclusion of the prayer's opening phrases on the backside of the Greek wooden tablet bolsters our understanding that it held a central ritualized position within daily life.[22]

According to Ibn al-Nadīm, who transmitted the Arabic version of the daily prayers, Manichaean catechumens prayed four times a day, with prostrations before the sun and the moon:

> And (Mani) imposed prayers, four or seven: and this means that a man stands and washes himself with flowing water, or with something else, and faces the greater luminary (that is, the sun by day or moon by night) standing. Then he prostrates himself and during his prostration he says [followed by the text of the prayers].[23]

The Manichaeans in Kellis followed the same ritual, maybe with some adaptations, facing the sun or the moon to prostrate themselves during each of the ten prayers.[24] This sequence of prostrations is indicated at the start of each stanza in the Kellis version of the daily prayers with προσκυνῶ in "I worship and glorify" (προσκυνῶ καὶ δοξάζω).[25] The direction of prayer also indicated a religious orientation toward the luminaries, as the catechumens prayed to the

21 This similarity is understood by Gardner as the result of a tradition building on an Aramaic *Vorlage* by Mani himself. This would also explain the lack of recognizable names of Manichaean deities, as the text from the daily prayers was from before the "scholastic" tradition in which this terminology played a large role. Gardner, "Manichaean Ritual Practice at Ancient Kellis," 258–9; Bermejo-Rubio, "Further Remarks," 237. Noteworthy is the absence of Christ and his redemptive work in the Arabic version. Gardner, "'With a Pure Heart and a Truthful Tongue'," 93–4.

22 I. Gardner, "P.Kellis 82 and an Unnoticed Record of the Manichaean Daily Prayers," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 211 (2019): 89–91.

23 Al-Nadīm, *The Fihrist*. Citation from unpublished translation by F. de Blois in Gardner, "'With a Pure Heart and a Truthful Tongue'," 83.

24 This description of the Manichaean believers washing themselves first with flowing water before the daily prayers has to be considered in light of geographical and temporal diversity. It may have been difficult to find flowing water in the Egyptian desert, even though Kellis was located in an oasis.

25 Gardner, "Manichaean Ritual Practice at Ancient Kellis," 246. Note that *proskynesis* was not uncommon in Early Christian traditions. Tertullian suggested that to kneel and prostrate before God was a daily observance, even though not always practiced in the communal liturgy. Tertullian, *Or.* 23.

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"sun and the moon, the great Light givers."[26] In Manichaean cosmology, the sun and the moon were the ships that brought Light particles from the soul toward their liberation, as also expressed in the elect's fundraising letter, which mentioned the sun and the moon as storehouses of spiritual riches (P.Kellis V Copt. 32).[27] The author of the letter apparently referred not only to highbrow cosmological notions, but also to elements known intimately from the daily prayers.

The Manichaeans in Kellis, in contrast to al-Nadīm's description, prayed three times a day. The *Prayer of the Emanations* stipulates prayers "at least on the third day" (ἢ κἂν τρίτης ἡμέρας), which meant three times a day, just as indicated in the Parthian parallel text.[28] The frequent performance of this prayer and the accompanying ten prostrations would have had a large impact on an individual's affiliation with the Manichaean community, in particular because repetitive physical efforts, such as bowing down, are known to trigger cognitive systems that help to entrench religious ideas in memory.[29] In addition, preparatory ritual washing (if performed at Kellis), and the conscious decision to face in the direction of the sun and the moon established a marked moment of Manichaeanness. The architecture of Houses 1–3 suggests that if the prayer was performed outside, or in the courtyard, the neighbors and other members of the household must have witnessed it.

Weekly Services

Weekly services took place on Sunday and Monday. Catechumens fasted on the day of the sun (the elect fasted more often), as the *Kephalaia* states: "[T]hey who have not strength to fast daily should make their fast on the Lord's day."[30] Apart from fasting, the celebration of the Lord's day included the singing of specific psalms, known from both the western and the eastern

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26 ⲉϥⲁϣⲗⲏⲗ ⲁⲡⲣⲏ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲟⲟϩ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁϭ ⲙⲫ[ⲱⲥⲧⲏⲣ] 1 Keph. 193.1.

27 Gardner, "Manichaean Ritual Practice at Ancient Kellis," 254–5.

28 P.Kellis VI Gr. 98.124–130. Gardner, "Manichaean Ritual Practice at Ancient Kellis," 258. François de Blois has argued that this may have been an adjustment to four out of the five public prayers of the Muslims. De Blois, "The Manichaean Daily Prayers," 51; Bermejo-Rubio, "'I Worship and Glorify'," 252–3, referring to Psalm fragment §368 in Durkin-Meisterernst and Morano, *Mani's Psalms*.

29 L.W. Barsalou, A.K. Barbey, W.K. Simmons, and A. Santos, "Embodiment in Religious Knowledge," *Journal of Cognition and Culture* 5, no. 1–2 (2005): 14–57. C. Bell, *Ritual. Perspectives and Dimensions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 72–76, 159–64.

30 ⲛⲉⲧⲉ ⲙ̄ⲛ ϭⲁⲙ [ⲙⲙⲁⲩ ⲁⲛⲏⲥⲧⲉⲩⲉ ⲙ]ⲙⲏⲛⲉ ϣⲁⲩⲣ̄ⲛⲏⲥⲧⲉⲩⲉ ϩⲱⲱⲩ [ϩⲙ] ⲡϩⲟⲟⲩⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲕⲩⲣⲓⲁⲕⲏ 1 Keph. 79, 191.31–192.1. cf. 1 Keph. 109, 262.15–21.

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Manichaean traditions.[31] A Manichaean leader who gathered fifty elect to fast provides a wonderful illustration of what may have happened during gatherings (1 Keph. 81, cited in the introduction). He explained, "seven angels shall be engendered by the fasting of each one of the elect; and not only the elect but the catechumens engender them on the Lord's day," so that each Sunday, at least 350 angels were engendered. After three Sundays, the leader "gave thanks for them on account of the great profit and good" that he had achieved, albeit without mentioning any role for catechumens.[32]

Almost none of the Kellis letters refer to a weekly service, but it stands to reason that Piene was learning Latin and public reading for such events, as the Teacher "made him read in every church" (ⲉϥⲧⲣⲉϥⲱ̣ϣ ⲕⲁⲧ̣ⲁ̣ ⲉ̣ⲕ̣ⲕ̣ⲗ̣ⲏ̣ⲥ̣ⲓⲁ P.Kellis V Copt. 25.46). A letter of Apa Lysimachos mentions Ision the lector ordering a brand new notebook (P.Kellis I Gr. 67.21). Ision's position as a lector (specifically a "Syriac reader," ἀναγνώστης συρ̣ι̣ατ̣τικός) and Piene's training both suggest that the Manichaeans had gatherings in which an official read from Manichaean literature, perhaps in Syriac (see chapter 7). Furthermore, Piene and Ision's reading in the church may be related to the ambiguous "service for the church" that had to be performed for the sake of (?) two young orphaned girls (ⲡϣⲙϣ̣ⲉ̣ ⲛⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ P.Kellis VII Copt. 73.16–17). This "service" may have designated a ritualized action, as the consequence sas "a hard burden at the judgement," and the benefit was "attain[ing] life eternal."[33] Read in tandem, these passages convey the impression of gatherings with readings and other communal rituals, even though it remains uncertain where, and how frequently, these gatherings took place.

After Sunday gatherings, Manichaeans set apart the day of the moon for the weekly confession of sins, a practice they conceived of as a specific gift

31 Including the unpublished hymns from first part of the *Psalmbook*. Iranian examples are published in C. Reck, *Gesegnet sei dieser Tag: Manichäische Festtagshymnen. Edition der mittelpersischen und parthischen Sonntags-, Montags- und Bemahymnen* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), 135–36. Asmussen argued that "the Manichaean [confessional] texts must be considered and studied as an exclusive Central Asian phenomenon." J.P. Asmussen, *Xuāstvānīft: Studies in Manichaeism* (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1965),124. This position is rejected in Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 143.

32 ϣⲁⲩϫⲡⲟ ⲥⲁϣϥ̄ ⲛ̄ⲁⲅⲅⲉⲗⲟⲥ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲛⲧⲛⲏⲥⲧⲓⲁ ⲙ̄ⲡⲟⲩ[ⲉ ⲡⲟⲩ]ⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲕⲗⲉⲕⲧⲟⲥ ⲟⲩ ⲙⲟⲛⲟⲛ ⲛⲉⲕⲗⲉⲕⲧⲟⲥ ⲙ̄ⲙⲉⲧⲉ ⲁⲗ[ⲗⲁ ⲛ]ⲕⲁⲧⲏⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ ϫⲡⲟ ⲙ̣ⲙⲁⲩ ⲙⲡϩⲟⲟⲩⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲕⲩⲣⲓⲁ[ⲕⲏ and ..ⲁï[ⲣ̄ⲭⲁⲣⲓⲍ̣ⲉ̣ ⲛ̣ⲉ̣ⲩ̣] ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲡⲛⲁϭ ⲛϩ̣ⲏ̣ⲩ ⲙ̄ⲛ ⲡⲁⲅⲁⲑ[ⲟⲛ] ⲉⲧⲁïⲉⲉϥ. 1 Keph 81. 193.29–31 and 194.11–12 (translation slightly modified).

33 ϫ̣ⲉⲧⲛⲁⲣ ⲡϣⲙϣ̣ⲉ̣ ⲛⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲡⲉ̣ⲓⲱⲧⲡ̣ ϫ̣ⲁⲃⲁⲧ ⲁⲡϩⲉⲡ.... [ϫⲉ] ⲉⲛⲁⲡϩ̣ ⲡ̣ⲱ̣ⲛϩ ⲛϣ̣ⲁ̣ⲁ̣ [ⲛⲏϩⲉ] P.Kellis VII Copt. 73.16–18, 23–24.

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from Mani himself.[34] Monday confessionary gatherings are referred to in the *Kephalaia* as a set of "second" fifty days, indicating their importance.[35] The Middle Persian and Parthian Monday hymns show that psalm singing constituted a large part of the ceremony. Communal reading and preaching also belonged to the liturgy, which was otherwise mostly focused on elect and catechumen confession rituals.[36] Texts from the eastern Manichaean tradition reveal a highly formalized weekly confession practice without strong indications of personalized confessions or penalties.[37] These rituals served as a technique for self-discipline, not through coercion, but through self-examination and repetition. Manichaean elect and catechumens observed their deeds and aimed to distinguish good from evil within themselves. Through the "extensive cataloguing of offenses," Manichaeans were engaged in reflective processes in which the self was shaped according to Manichaean standards, and behavioral norms were enforced and internalized.[38] Despite the relative scarcity of Greek and Coptic references to Monday confession rituals, it is likely that the Manichaeans in Egypt were familiar with this ritual. The *Psalmbook* may have alluded to it as the "day of forgiveness of sins."[39] The *Kephalaia* states that the failure to confess could result in hindrances after death (1 Keph. 128, 305.19–24).[40]

34 C. Reck, "Some Remarks on the Monday and Bema Hymns of the German Turfan Collection," in *Atti del terzo congresso internazionale di studi "Manicheismo e Oriente cristiano antico,"* ed. A. van Tongerloo and L. Cirillo (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997), 300–1. On the confession rituals, see Burkitt, *Religion of the Manichees*, 48–59; Asmussen, *Xuāstvānīft*, passim.

35 1 Keph. 109, 262.12, 19–20, 263.28 discussed in E. Smagina, "Some Words with Unknown Meaning in Coptic Manichaean Texts," *Enchoria* 17 (1990): 122. Translated and referred to as Mondays by Reck, who has also gathered other references to this Monday gathering Reck, *Gesegnet sei dieser Tag*, 10–14 and passim.

36 For the liturgy, see the reconstruction by Henning in Reck, *Gesegnet sei dieser Tag*, 12–13.

37 BeDuhn, "The Manichaean Weekly Confession Ritual," 284.

38 J.D. BeDuhn, "The Near Eastern Connections of Manichaeans Confessionary Practice," *Proceedings of the ARAM Eighteenth International Conference: The Manichaeans* 16, no. 2 (2004): 177.

39 2 PsB. 140.19–24, discussed in Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 31–32; J.D. BeDuhn, "The Manichaean Weekly Confession Ritual," in *Practicing Gnosis: Ritual, Magic, Theurgy and Liturgy in Nag Hammadi, Manichaean and Other Ancient Literature*, ed. A.D. DeConick, G. Shaw, and J.D. Turner (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 277–8.

40 Funk's German translation of this fragmentary chapter is entitled "über die Buße (μετάνοια)," but the actual passage does not make clear whether penance or forgiveness in general is discussed. I understand this chapter (as well as the following about envy) as Manichaean parallels to Early Christian discourse on forgiveness, especially since 1 Keph. 128, 305.28 and 30 seem to allude to the biblical question about how often someone should grant forgiveness (Matt 18).

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Confessionary gatherings on Monday may have provided the background to Makarios's conflict with the deacon (ⲇⲓⲁⲕⲱⲛ), cited at the outset of this chapter. Makarios writes to his family:

> They said … a deacon who was turned away from there, the one who … while he was with me, I used to argue with him daily. Because during his practice he would be angry with me saying: "what do you have against me?"[41]

It seems that Makarios had a conflict during the deacon's religious (?) "practice" (ⲙⲉⲗⲉⲧⲁ), leading to a recurring "daily" argument. The Coptic term ⲙⲉⲗⲉⲧⲁ is unfortunately not specifically tied to an identifiable ritual, which makes it difficult to determine the nature of the situation in which the conflict occurred.[42] If the conflict was indeed with a Manichaean deacon – who are not commonly included in standardized lists of Manichaean church hierarchy[43] – the confessional context is most plausible, as the elect would be confronted in that setting with what BeDuhn calls the "scrutinizing gaze of the laypeople."[44] The mutual observation of behavior and associated pastoral care was also a topic in one of Mani's *Epistles* discovered among the papyri remains in Kellis. It calls for introspection and social pressure when prescribing how to confront a "brother":

41 P.Kellis v Copt. 19.47–51 (see the Coptic text and notes at the beginning of this chapter).

42 [ϩ]ⲛ̄ⲡⲓⲧⲱϣ ⲙ̄ⲡⲓⲣⲏⲧⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ϯⲙⲉⲗⲉⲧⲏ ⲉⲧⲙⲏⲛ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲁⲓ̈ϫⲱⲕⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲯⲩⲭⲏ ϩⲛ̄ϯⲥⲃⲱ ⲛ̄ⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ. 2 PsB. 101.28 "through such an order and through this constant exercise, I have flavoured my soul in this divine teaching." 1 Keph. 142.23 is about the "practices of life's concerns" (ⲛ̄ⲧ̣ⲙⲉⲗⲉⲧⲁ ⲛ̄ⲛⲣⲁⲩϣ ⲙ̄ⲡⲃⲓ[ⲟ]ⲥ) instead of ritual. In Egyptian Christian texts, the term is used for prayer, meditation and reading, for example in the *Apophthegmata Patrum* (John the Dwarf, 35; Zeno, 5 etc.).

43 They do not appear in the standardized lists of twelve teachers, seventy-two bishops, and 360 presbyters. Sometimes, however, they seem to have taken the place of the bishops (1 Keph. 9, 42.2–8, Hom 22.3–7). Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 75. Lim notes the curious passage in Augustine's epistles where the laying on of hands is attributed to "priests or bishops or deacons" (*presbyteris uel episcopis aut diaconis*). Augustine, *Ep*. 236. Lim, "Unity and Diversity among Western Manichaeans: A Reconsideration of Mani's *Sancta Ecclesia*," *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 35 (1989): 234n10 and 237. Similar observations about the ambiguity of this title in relation to the position of the bishops are discussed by Leurini, who suggests that Western Manichaeans adopted the title bishop because within a Christian milieu it would have been impossible to accept the superiority of the deacon over the presbyter. Leurini, *The Manichaean Church*, 190–212. The deacon, in the Kellis passage, is described as someone who "was turned away from there," which suggests a level of rejection from an unknown third party (ⲟⲩⲇⲓⲁⲕⲱⲛ ⲉϩⲁⲩⲡⲁⲛⲉϥ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲙ̄ⲙⲟ P.Kellis v Copt. 19.48).

44 BeDuhn, "The Domestic Setting," 264–5.

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> His sins are drawn to his brother, the one in whom he sees this sin, from his mouth to the ear of his brother; so that he will speak with him in gentleness, with an embrace between him and his brother [...] is my child, until he finds the way to lead him (?) away from the sin by good advice [lit: "whisper"] in which there is no envy.[45]

Emphasizing that even children who have gone astray will receive grace, the text promises forgiveness after repentance: "[H]e will bring them to repentance and forgive them their sins."[46] For this reason, catechumens are instructed to live in peace and bear with the brothers they serve (P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 42.14–15). Rather than spreading rumors, the audience is urged to develop pastoral care among the brothers (i.e., the elect), and a low-key style of confrontation that encourages repentance. If this was the context for Makarios's conflict with the deacon, the adjective "daily" (ⲙ̄ⲙⲏⲛⲉ) must have been an exaggeration.

Annual Celebrations

Eastern Manichaean sources inform us about a cycle of communal fasts, culminating in the annual Bema festival, which lasted for four days, likely at the end of a month of fasting.[47] During this festival, Manichaeans commemorated the passion of Mani.[48] For four days, catechumens and elect fasted, prayed,

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45 ⲛ̣ⲉϥⲛ̣ⲁⲃⲉ̣ [ⲥ]ⲏ̣ⲕ̣ ϣⲁ̣ⲡ̣ⲉϥⲥⲁⲛ̣ ⲡ̣ⲉⲧⲉ̣ϥⲛⲉⲩ ⲁⲡⲓⲛⲁⲃ̣ⲉ̣ ⲛ̄ϩⲏⲧϥ̄ ϫⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ⲧϥⲧⲁⲡⲣⲟ ⲁ̣ⲡ̣[ⲙ]ⲉ̣ⲥ̣ϫⲉ ⲙ̣̄ⲡ̣ⲉ̣ϥⲥⲁⲛ ⲛ̣ϥ̀ⲥⲉϫⲉ ⲛⲙ̄ⲙⲉ[ϥ ϩ]ⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲙⲛ̄ⲧϩ̣ⲗ̣̀ϭ̣ⲏ̣ⲧ̣ ⲙ̣ⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲁⲥⲡⲁⲥⲙ̣[ⲟⲥ] ⲟⲩⲧⲱϥ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲉϥⲥⲁⲛ ⲙ̄ … […]ⲡ̣ⲁϣ̣ⲏ̣ⲣⲉ ⲡⲉ: ϣⲁⲧ̀ϥϭ̣ⲛ̣̄ [……].̀ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲛⲁⲃⲉ ϩⲛ̄ⲟ̣ⲩ̣ⲕ̣ⲉ̣ⲥ̣ⲕ̣ⲥ̣ ⲉ̣ⲛ̣ⲁ̣ⲛⲟⲩϥ ⲉⲙⲛ̄ ⲫⲑ̣ⲟ̣ⲛⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ϩⲏⲧϥ … P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 32.16–24 (slightly modified translation).

46 ⲛ̣ϥ̣̄ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲩ ⲁⲧⲙⲉⲧⲁ̣ⲛⲟⲓⲁ ⲛ̣ϥ̣̄ⲣ̣̄ [ⲡⲕⲉ]ⲕⲱ̣ ⲛⲉⲩ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲛ̄ⲛ̣ⲟⲩⲛ̣[ⲁ]ⲃ̣[ⲉ] P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 41.3–4.

47 W. Sundermann, "Bema." *Encyclopædia Iranica Online*, last updated: December 15, 1989, http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/bema-festival-manicheans (accessed January 10, 2017); W. Sundermann, "Festivals II: Manichean." *Encyclopædia Iranica Online*, last updated: January 26, 2012, http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/festivals-ii (accessed January 10, 2017), citing W. Henning, "The Manichaean Fasts," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 2 (1945): 148; C.R.C. Allberry, "Das manichäische Bema-Fest," *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche wissenschaft* 37 (1938): 2–10; J.P. Asmussen, *Manichaean Literature: Representative Texts Chiefly from Middle Persian and Parthian Writings* (Delmar: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1975), 178, 198. Wurst considers the month of fasting a late development, not present in the Western Manichaean tradition Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 23–28.

48 Although it was also conceived of as an end-of-year festival with eschatological overtones or a festival of gnosis. Sundermann, "Bema."; J. Ries, "La fête de bêma dans l'église de Mani," *Revue d'etudes augustiniennes et patristiques* 22, no. 3–4 (1976): 226, 231. The conceptualization of Mani's death and salvation as constituting a "new year," may have developed into a New Year festival as attested in Manichaean letters from Bäzäklik. Reck, *Gesegnet sei dieser Tag*, 34; Yoshida, "Manichaean Sogdian Letters," 233–36. The parallel between the Manichaean Yimki fasts and the Zoroastirian Gahanbar, culminating in the

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sang, and refrained from all worldly activities. The liturgy of the festival has been preserved in various Iranian languages, one version published as early as 1936 in the *Bet- und Beichtbuch*.[49] These liturgical texts can be read in dialogue with the large number of Bema hymns and psalms that exist in various languages. Similarities between the texts point to a transregional tradition that also gained a foothold in Egypt.

The Coptic Manichaica does not include preparation for the Bema festival with a series of two-day fasts, (as with the Yimki fasts), with the exception of a fragmentary passage in the *Psalmbook* mentioning a "first vigil" and "second vigil" (ⲡϣⲁⲣⲡ̄ ⲙ̄ⲡⲁⲛⲛⲩⲭⲓⲥⲙⲟⲥ, ⲡⲙⲁϩⲥⲛⲉⲩ ⲙ̄ⲡⲁⲛⲛⲩⲭⲓⲥⲙⲟⲥ, 2 PsB. 140.25 and 28), which follows a discussion of Sunday and Monday services.[50] The nature and occasion of these vigils, as well as their relation to the Yimki fasts of the eastern tradition, is not clear, especially as the commemoration of Manichaean martyrs is unacknowledged in Coptic Manichaean texts. The close association of the vigils with a "day of our Apostle" (2 PsB. 140.30) suggests a connection with the Bema-festival, but this can only be confirmed after the "psalms of the vigil" from the first part of the *Psalmbook* are published.[51] Until that time, it remains uncertain how Egyptian Manichaeans would have prepared themselves for the Bema festival.

The celebration of the Bema festival in Egypt is confirmed by the papyri and wooden boards from Kellis. At least one version of the *Psalmbook*'s Bema psalms was also found at Kellis (T.Kellis II Copt. 4, side a, parallel with Bema Psalm 222 of the Medinet Madi *Psalmbook*).[52] These songs commemorate Mani's suffering and death, and carry strong eschatological overtones. Bema Psalm 222 characterized the *bema* (the seat of Mani) as "a landing place of your days, a place of cleansing of your life, a chest filled with teaching, a ladder to the heights,

Nowruz (New Year) festival, has been noted frequently. Klimkeit, *Gnosis at the Silk Road*, 33n25.

49 W. Henning, "Ein manichäisches Bet- und Beichtbuch," *Abhandlungen der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Berlin. Phil. Hist. Klasse* 10 (1936): 1–143. English translation in Klimkeit, *Gnosis at the Silk Road*, 133–144.

50 Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 31–32.

51 A. Böhlig, "Neue Initiativen zur erschließung der koptisch-manichäischen Bibliothek von Medinet Madi," *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* 80, no. 3 (1989): 146; A. Böhlig, "Zur Facsimileausgabe der Dubliner Manichaica," in *Studia Manichaica. II. Internationaler Kongreß zum Manichäismus*, ed. G. Wießner and H.J. Klimkeit (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1992), 72–75; Sundermann, "Festivals II. Manichean."

52 German translation in Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 153–236; G. Wurst, ed., *The Manichaean Coptic Papyri in the Chester Beatty Library. Psalm Book. Part II, Fasc. 1. Die Bema-Psalmen* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1996).

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a counting balance of your deeds."[53] The *bema* was a five-step platform representing the judgment seat of Jesus, onto which Mani descended during the festival. After the celebrations, the souls of the Manichaeans were imagined to ascend up the steps of the *bema* into the Light (2 PsB. 7.32, 22.6–10). The *bema* was not only a place of forgiveness and judgment, but also of teaching, since Manichaeans communally read the *Sermon on the Great War* (Hom. 7.8–42.8) and narratives of Jesus's life.[54] They also sang extensively about the life and suffering of Mani during the festival (Bema Psalm 226).[55] The festival and songs functioned, therefore, not only as "a ladder to the heights" (ⲟⲩϭⲗⲟϭⲉ ⲁⲡϫⲓⲥⲉ), contributing to salvation, but also as a "chest filled with teaching" (ⲟⲩⲕⲓⲃⲱⲧⲟⲥ ⲉⲥⲙⲏϩ ⲛ̄ⲥⲃⲱ), describing and defining Manichaean history, cosmology, and regulations for a correct Manichaean life (2 PsB. 8.1–4).[56]

Apart from the indirect evidence for a Bema-festival celebration in the Kellis copies of Bema psalms, the occasional references to Easter in the Kellis papyri may shed light on annual celebrations. The editors already note that it is "unclear as to whether the Manichaeans in some sense assimilated the two occasions," primarily because Augustine contrasted Manichaean participation in the Bema festival with Easter.[57] He reported that, "the paschal feast of our lord was celebrated with little or no interest, though sometimes there were a few half-hearted worshippers," who did not engage in a "solemn ceremony" with special fasting, while in contrast, they paid "great honour […] to your (feast of the) Bema, that is, the day on which Manichaeus was martyred." "In fact," he says about his own time with the Manichaeans, "it was a great pleasure to us that the fest of the Bema was held during Pascha, as we used to desire with great ardour that festal day since the other which was once so

53 ⲙⲁⲣⲉ ⲡⲃⲏⲙⲁ ϣⲱⲡⲉ ⲛⲉ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲙⲁ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉ ⲁϩⲉ· ⲟⲩⲙⲁ ⲛ̄ϫⲱⲕⲙⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲱⲛϩ̣· ⲟⲩⲕⲓⲃⲱⲧⲟⲥ ⲉⲥⲙⲏϩ ⲛ̄ⲥⲃⲱ· ⲟⲩϭⲗⲟϭⲉ ⲁⲡϫⲓⲥⲉ· ⲟⲩⲙⲁϣⲉⲥϣⲡ̣ ⲛⲧⲉ ⲛⲉϩⲃⲏⲩⲉ … 2 PsB. 8.1–4. A full and improved translation of this psalm, incorporating the Kellis text, is given at Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 78.

54 Pedersen, *Studies*, 315–19, 345 and 400.

55 According to Wurst, the remembrance of Mani became more central in the western Manichaean tradition. Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 151, cf. pages 22–5 on Psalm 226. This element is less central in eastern Manichaean texts. Reck, *Gesegnet sei dieser Tag*, 29. I am following Wurst's numbering of the Bema psalms.

56 Similarly, in the Bema liturgy in Persian, Parthian and Sogdian, which contains the final portion of Mani's "letter of the seal," to be read during the Bema festival. The songs, moreover, include extensive praise of the transempirical entities as well as the members of the living community, catechumens elect and in particular those with a function within the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road*, 133–39.

57 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 79.

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very precious had been removed."[58] The one dated reference to Easter in the Kellis papyri (KAB 1717, April 4, 364 CE), however, is considered too late for the Bema-festival.[59]

Subsequent publications have brought to light additional papyri referring to Manichaean Easter celebrations, including two Kellis papyri and one Manichaean letter from Oxyrhynchus. In one of the Kellis letters, Ploutogenes asks Pshai to intervene with Kapition, who had promised to do something "by all means, a few days after Easter."[60] The second reference is by Makarios, who asks Maria for fruits "for Easter."[61] In a Greek Manichaean letter, a man called Besas made a similar request for additional gifts to his mother Maria in Oxyrhynchus: "Do not neglect to send me the cloak for the Easter festival."[62] The unpublished first part of the Psalmbook also includes five Easter psalms, thereby corroborating that Manichaeans celebrated this festival annually.[63] Either the Manichaeans participated in local Easter rituals along with all other Christians from the village, or they identified Easter with the Bema festival and celebrated the latter under the name of "Pascha." The former is possible, since the suffering of Jesus on the cross was very important for the Manichaean ideology of suffering and persecution, which highlighted Jesus's death as a primary example of the rejection of the message of Light by the world. The latter depends on the veracity of Augustine's testimony and the absence of any explicit reference in the Kellis papyri to the commemoration

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58 Both citations from Augustine, *Fund.*, 8, translation by S. Lieu in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 77. Not only Augustine recognized the strong resemblance between Easter and the Bema festival; scholars have noted the similarities with the Syriac Easter festival. G.A.M. Rouwhorst, "Das manichaeische Bemafest und das Passafest der syrischen Christen," *Vigiliae Christianae* 35, no. 4 (1981): 404–5. Wurst has rejected such a "genetischer Zusammenhang," despite the similarities between the two traditions. Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 15.

59 Bagnall, *KAB*, 83; Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 79. The wine associated with the "festival of Pharmouthi" in the KAB makes it unlikely that this referred to a Manichaean celebration.

60 ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ ⲙⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲥⲁ ϩⲛ̄ⲕⲉⲕⲟⲩϊ ⲛ̄ϩⲟⲟⲩ ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲡⲁⲥⲭⲁ P.Kellis VII Copt. 86.11–13. I follow the alternative translation of A. Shisha-Halevy, "Review Article of: Gardner, Iain; Alcock, Anthony; Funk, Wolf-Peter: Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis Volume 2," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 106 (2016): 273.

61 ⲛ̄ⲧⲡⲁⲥ̣ⲭⲁ P.Kellis V Copt. 22.18.

62 μὴ οὖν ἀμελήσῃς πέμψαι μοι τὸ ἱμάτιον εἰ⟨ς⟩ τὴν ἑορτὴν τοῦ Πάσχα. P.Harr. I 107.18–21. I have modified the translations and used "Easter" rather than "Pascha" festival.

63 M. Krause, "Zum Aufbau des koptisch-manichäischen Psalmen-Buches," in *Manichaica Selecta I: Studies Presented to Professor Julien Ries on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday*, ed. A. van Tongerloo and S. Giversen (Lovanii: International Association of Manichaean Studies, 1991), 183.

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of Mani's suffering.[64] In both scenarios, Manichaean families would gather for this annual celebration.

Did Makarios Go to Church? On the Location of Manichaean Gatherings

With this overview of Kellis evidence for communal Manichaean meetings, the question of location may be raised.[65] Some (non-Manichaean) Christians gathered weekly, or even daily, either at home, at the graveyard, or in one of the three church buildings at Kellis.[66] Did Manichaeans attend these gatherings, or did they only meet regularly with fellow Manichaeans?

A first option is that Manichaeans held gatherings in specific church buildings. While this seems likely, there is no indication in the archaeology to confirm this hypothesis. Archaeologists have speculated about the Manichaean use of the West Church and its ancillary building(s), primarily because of the poverty of the adjacent graves, which might indicate Manichaeanness, but there is no trace of evidence to support this reconstruction.[67] Other scholars suggest the presence of a Manichaean monastery, but this is likewise without tangible archaeological support (see the next section).[68] Despite this lack of firm archaeological evidence, literary sources from the Roman Empire at large point to the existence of Manichaean church buildings. Cyril of Jerusalem admonished his audience to ask specifically for the catholic church when visiting another city so they would not be misled by Manichaean churches.[69]

64 One of the Syriac-Coptic writing exercises includes the Coptic phrase "we have made a festival," a phrase which is often used for the Bema festival (ⲁⲛⲣ̄ ϣⲁïⲉ, T.Kellis II Syr./Copt 1.28. Parallels in 2 PsB. 14.13 and 25.27).

65 I owe the sub-title to M.A. Williams, "Did Plotinus 'Friends' Still Go to Church? Communal Rituals and Ascent Apocalypses," in *Practicing Gnosis*, ed. A.D. DeConick, G. Shaw, and J.D. Turner (Leiden: Brill, 2013): 495–522.

66 On daily prayers and the domestic consumption of the Eucharist, see K. Bowes, "Personal Devotions and Private Chapels," in *Late Ancient Christianity: A People's History of Christianity*, ed. V. Burrus (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 193–99.

67 Bowen, "Some Observations," 177.

68 Gardner, following Puech, has raised the question whether Manichaeans may have had two distinct types of religious buildings: churches and monasteries. Only to admit that the Kellis churches cannot answer this question for us. Gardner, "Monastery," 256, citing Puech, "Liturgie et pratiques rituelles," 255; cf. J. Ries, *L'église gnostique de Mani* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 194–99.

69 "[W]hen you visit or sojourn in another city, inquire not merely where the congregation for the *kyriakon* is taking place (for other profane sects attempt to call their dens *kyriaka*), nor simply where the Church is, but to seek for the Catholic Church." Cyril of

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Unfortunately, he does not indicate where these Manichaean church gatherings took place. The increasingly strict legislation against Manichaeism suggests that monumental basilica-type churches (such as the Large East Church at Kellis, and the church at Ain el-Gedida) were not commonly used by Manichaeans.

The second option, therefore, is that Manichaeans gathered in houses and multipurpose spaces, just like most other Roman associations and early Christian groups.[70] Roman anti-Manichaean legislation targeted domestic buildings, as increasing emphasis was put on "houses and habitations" (*domus et habitacula*) in laws from 372 CE onwards.[71] Subsequent legislation, such as the rescripts issued by Theodosius, forbade the transfer of property to Manichaeans and ordered the confiscation of their real estate.[72] This domestic option is imaginable in Kellis, although some practical and archaeological questions remain. Most of the rooms in which Manichaean documents were found are small and relatively dark (measuring between 18 to 43 m²). Few people could gather there. Alternatively, the courtyard could have been used to assemble. In House 1, the courtyard was about 110 m², and the adjacent room had a *stibadium* for dinner occasions. The House 2 courtyard, only accessible through the streets, was roughly 195 m² (see Figure 4 in chapter 1). Part of this space was used to keep animals, but there are no further indications of the type of social activities employed in this space. Rather than using these outside spaces, Manichaeans may have gone to the larger houses of their patrons, as the *Kephalaia* states that a wealthy catechumen should construct "a house" (ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲙⲁⲛ̄ϣⲱⲡⲉ) or "a place" (ⲟⲩⲧⲟ̣[ⲡⲟⲥ]) for the church "so that it

Jerusalem, *Catech.* XVIII, 26.1–16 cited and translated at R. Matsangou, "Real and Imagined Manichaeans in Greek Patristic Anti-Manichaica (4th–6th Centuries)," in *Manichaeism East and West*, ed. S.N.C. Lieu (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 159–70. She points to the decree by Gratian (379 CE) in which Manichaeans are prohibited to congregate in churches.

70 J.S. Kloppenborg, "Membership Practices in Pauline Christ Groups," *Early Christianity* 4, no. 2 (2013): 183–215. Similar considerations in L.H. Martin, "When Size Matters: Social Formations in the Early Roman Empire," in *"The One Who Sows Bountifully": Essays in Honor of Stanley K. Stowers*, ed. C.J. Hodge, et al. (Providence: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 229–241.

71 C.Th. 16.5.3 (372 CE), cited from Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 26. On the post-Constantinian marginalization of heterodox groups in the domestic sphere, see Maier, "Heresy, Households," 213–33.

72 C.Th. 16.5.7 (381 CE), C.Th 16.5.9 (382 CE) and C.Th. 16.5.11 (383 CE). Discussed in depth in the forthcoming dissertation of R. Matsangou and in P. Beskow, "The Theodosian Laws against Manichaeism," in *Manichaean Studies. Proceedings of the First International Conference on Manichaeism*, ed. P. Bryder (Lund: Plus Ultra, 1988), 1–11; K. Bowes, *Private Worship, Public Values and Religious Change in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 92–98.

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will be turned for him into a portion of alms in the holy church."[73] Makarios's reference to "our sanctuary" (ⲣ̄ⲡⲉⲓ̑) in P.Kellis V Copt. 22.61 also points to a distinct gathering place outside the house, albeit without further contextual information.

The third option is to consider whether the Manichaeans of Kellis participated in the non-Manichaean Christian liturgy in addition to their own meetings, either because they considered themselves to be Christians or in order to proselytize secretly from within the Christian church. While both options are possible, and find some level of support in literary sources regarding crypto-Manichaeism,[74] the archaeology and papyri from Kellis cannot confirm or deny this scenario. The church buildings contain no indications of the type of gatherings held there, nor are there any profound indications about the relations between Christians and Manichaeans in the papyrus letters. Specific evidence of Makarios's participation in non-Manichaean communal gatherings has not been transmitted. The previously mentioned celebration of Easter, may point to participation in non-Manichaean communal rituals, but it is difficult to establish how common this was.

The lack of a clear-cut answer implies that a variety of locations were used, depending on the nature of the gathering, the presence of the elect, and the availability of wealthy patrons. Pausanias may have offered space for the earliest generation of Manichaeans, but it seems unlikely that such support was still available to Makarios and his sons. Because all liturgical documents were found in residential areas, it is most probable that Manichaeans in the later generation gathered at home.

A Manichaean Monastery in the Oasis?

A related question ties the Kellis papyri to a longstanding debate about role and origins of monastic communities within the Manichaean tradition. Could there have been a Manichaean monastery in the oasis? The existence of Manichaean monasteries in the Roman Empire is especially contested. Augustine's polemical story about the failure of Manichaean communal living seems to imply that this model was not common in his time, but Manichaean hagiographical

73 … ⲧⲁⲣⲟⲩⲉ̣ⲉ̣ϥ ⲁⲣⲁϥ ⲁⲩⲧⲁⲓ̈ⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙⲛⲧⲛⲁⲉ [ϩ]ⲛ̄ ⲧ[ⲉ]ⲕⲕ[ⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ] ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃ[ⲉ] 1 Keph. 80, 193.13–14 (modified translation). A similar obligation to give "churches and houses" is included in 1 Keph. 158, 396.8.

74 Matsangou, "Real and Imagined Manichaeans," 169 argues that crypto-Manichaeism was employed as a missionary strategy.

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stories attribute the foundation of many monasteries to Adda, Mani's missionary to the Roman Empire.[75] On one end of the spectrum are scholars such as Jes Peter Asmussen and Samuel Lieu, who consider Manichaean monasticism to be a feature of the Central Asian tradition, maybe even an imitation of Buddhist practice.[76] On the other end of the spectrum stand those who regard monasticism as an early feature of the Manichaean church, perhaps inherited from the Baptist community of Mani's youth.[77] Those who follow the latter line of thought point to the Middle Persian traditions about Adda as evidence for ubiquitous Manichaean monastic traditions, while supporters of the former position regard this as an anachronistic projection of Central Asian practice onto the western Manichaean tradition.[78]

A number of passages in the Kellis papyri incited discussion about the existence of a Manichaean monastery in the oasis.[79] Some scholars have even considered the possibility of a Manichaean influence on the development of Egyptian monasticism.[80] Could this be the missing link connecting the earliest monastic movements in Egypt with similar institutions in the Buddhist East?[81] With these larger questions in mind, much weight has been given to

75 Mar Adda "laboured very hard in these areas, founded many monasteries, chose many elect and hearers, composed writings and made wisdom his weapon." M2 I R 1–33 cited in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 21 which also includes the Parthian and Sogdian version of the same narrative. On the identification of Adda and Adimantus, as well as the most probable historical diffusion of Manichaeism in Egypt, see van den Berg, *Biblical Argument*, 31–48.

76 Asmussen, *Xuāstvānīft*, 260n14; Lieu, "Precept and Practice," 155–56.

77 Koenen, "Manichäische Mission und Klöster," 93–108.

78 Werner Sundermann's early dating of Parthian fragments has suggested that at least some type of monastic organization came from Mani's own lifetime. In one of these fragments, Mani stayed in a "monastic house" (*manistan-kadag*, Middle Persian text M 4579). W. Sundermann, *Mitteliranische manichäische Texte kirchengeschichtlichen Inhalts* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1981), 70.

79 Gardner, "Monastery," 247–57. Despite his careful phrasing, the existence of the Manichaean monastery has been taken for granted in current literature, for example in Christoph Markschies, *Gnosis: An Introduction* (London: T&T Clark, 2003), 63.

80 As suggested by Stroumsa, "The Manichaean Challenge to Egyptian Christianity," 307–19. A similar notion was discussed earlier in J. Vergote, "Het Manichaeisme in Egypte," *Jaarbericht van het Vooraziatisch-Egyptisch genootschap Ex Oriente Lux* 9 (1944): 77–83. A direct connection with Pachomian monasticism is discussed and rejected by W. Harmless, *Desert Christians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 435–39. Cf. the comparison in F. Vecoli, "Communautés religieuses dans l'Égypte du IVème siècle: Manichéens et cénobites," *Historia Religionum* 3 (2011): 23–46.

81 The absence of a primary dwelling function is one of the main differences with Pachomian monasticism. The Chinese *Compendium* refers to monasteries as centers of learning rather than as communal dwellings. W. Sundermann, "Mani, India and the Manichaean

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some ambiguous phrases, such as "topos Mani" in the Kellis Account Book, or casual references to vocational training in a "monastery" in the personal letters. Regardless of the tantalizing nature of the possibility, there is very little solid evidence that this early monastery in the oasis was Manichaean.

The case for a Manichaean monastery is made on the basis of two passages in the KAB and two papyrus letters. In the KAB, the *topos mani* (Τόπ[ος] Μανι) is referred to as a tenant who owes olives and dates (KAB 320, 513), to be paid as rent on leased land. Since the term τόπος was regularly used to designate monasteries in fourth- and fifth-century literature, and two monks are mentioned in the text, it appears to support the existence of a monastery associated with "Mani." The first monk, Petros the *monachos*, paid "in place of Mani" (ἀντὶ Μανι ἔκοψα KAB 975, the same person pays for dates, 1433, and for olives, 1109). A second monk, Timotheos *monachos*, who acted as an intermediary for the son of the largest single tenant of the estate, was never explicitly associated with any institution (KAB 1080).[82] A little more information is provided in two papyrus letters. One of these letters (P.Kellis V Copt. 12) is associated with the Manichaean families of House 3, as the author greets a number of people known from Manichaean letters.[83] With regard to the monastery, however,

Religion," *South Asian Studies* 2, no. 1 (1986): 17. On the *Compendium*, see E. Chavannes and P. Pelliot, "Un traité manichéen retrouvé en Chine (2)," *Journal Asiatique* (1913): 108–14. 99–199, 261–394. The Chinese *Traité* explicitly designates elect who retire "to a room alone," separating themselves from the catechumens, "like a sick man." For the translation, see S.N.C. Lieu and G.B. Mikkelsen, eds., *Tractatus Manichaicus Sinicus: Pars Prima; Text, Translation and Indices* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 61. The monasteries (*Mānīstān*) of the East were rigidly stratified and economically active in the Uighur kingdom. P. Zieme, "Mānīstān 'Kloster' und manichäische Kolophone," in *Zur lichten Heimat: Studien zu Manichäismus, Iranistik und Zentralasienkunde im Gedenken an Werner Sundermann*, ed. Team Turfanforschung (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2017), 737–754; G. Shimin, "Notes on an Ancient Uighur Official Decree Issued to a Manichaean Monastery," *Central Asiatic Journal* 35 (1991): 209–23; B. Utas, "Mānīstān and Xānaquāh," in *Papers in Honour of Professor Mary Boyce II*, ed. H.W. Bailey (Leiden: Brill, 1985): 655–64; Lieu, *Manichaeism in Central Asia and China*, 103–10.

82 Bagnall, *KAB*, 82. Timotheos could have been the brother of Nos and therefore one of the sons of Kome, the largest single tenant. The term *monasterion* is also found in an unpublished piece from the temple area (P.96.31,9). Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 275. The Petros figure in P.Kellis V Copt. 38–41 may or may not have been the same as the monk in the KAB. The Shenoutan corpus refers to Manichaean monks in the same region, see S.G. Richter, "Manichaeism and Gnosticism in the Panopolitan Region between Lykopolis and Nag Hammadi," in *Christianity and Monasticism in Upper Egypt*, ed. G. Gabra and H.N. Takla (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2008), 121–29.

83 The letter mentions Tapshai, Andreas, Pshemnoute, and Kyria, all of who feature in the Makarios archive. Despite the absence of marked Manichaean language, therefore, this letter is generally read against a Manichaean background.

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it only speaks of a young boy sent to the monastery (μονοστή[ριον]) to learn the linen-weaving trade from an ascetic (?) father, Pebok.[84] The second letter refers to a monastery in connection with what seems to be an unit of measure associated with an ascetic father, as twenty *chous* is said to be paid "per the *chous* (–measure) of my father Shoei of the monastery" (ϣⲟⲉⲓ ⲛ̄ϩⲁⲛⲉⲧⲁ).[85] The Coptic word ϩⲉⲛⲉⲧⲉ in this passage may refer to a local place name in the oasis, but the traditional meaning of monastery is more likely, due to the "father" figure. This latter passage is not directly associated with any of the Manichaean families. On the contrary, the letter was found beside a letter containing Christian terminology (P.Kellis VII Copt. 124) in House 4.[86] Without strong Manichaean language in either of the letters, and with only weak prosopographical connections, it is most problematic to read these passages as conclusive evidence for the existence of a Manichaean monastery. Additional passages regarding a "place" (ⲙⲁ) or a "cell" (ⲣⲓ) may shed more light on the location of some of the elect, but they do not confirm anything more about the role of a monastery in education and economic activities.[87]

Establishing a connection between the papyrus letters, the KAB, and the Manichaeans is not easy, since we do not know whether they refer to the same monastic institution. While Τόπ(ος) usually referred to a monastery, it also held a more general meaning. In the third century, it was used to designate a church community (P.Oxy. XII 1492),[88] and it was also used twice in the KAB to designate other place names (KAB 408, in 545 the "place of Pisechthis," Τόπῳ Πισήχ[θιος]). The identification of a Manichaean monastery in Kellis, moreover, rests heavily on the interpretation of Μανι as a personal name. Several scholars have already pointed out that the Greek title Μάνης or Μανιχαῖος was a title rather than a personal name, and it seems unlikely that the construction Τόπος Μανι meant "the monastery of Mani."[89] This leaves us with only a bare

84 Κα[θὼς ἐδήλως]ά σοι περὶ τὸν υἱὸν [...]βάλε εἰς τὸ μονοστή[ριον ὅπου δι]δάσκι αὐτὸν λίνου[φικήν. P.Kellis I Gr. 12.16–20 (NB. Worp's reading of ο instead of α receives no further comment in the edition). See also P.Kellis V Copt. 12.18–20, Samoun instructing his father Tithoes about his son Tithoes.

85 ⲙ̄ⲡⲕⲟⲩⲥ ⲛ̄ⲡⲁⲉⲓⲱⲧ ϣⲟⲉⲓ ⲛ̄ϩⲁⲛⲉⲧⲁ P.Kellis VII Copt. 123.15–17.

86 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 174–276.

87 For example the "little cell" in P.Kellis V Copt. 39.35 and the "place" associated with an "old man" (ϩⲗⲗⲟ often used for "monk") in P.Kellis V Copt. 40.12–3. Teigen also points to P.Kellis VII Copt. 120, in which a "father" is associated with a (Manichaean?) text that has to be brought to a "place for convalescence (ⲡϣⲧⲟ)". Teigen, *The Manichaean Church in Kellis*, 280.

88 Luijendijk, *Greetings in the Lord*, 133 lists also P.Oxy. VIII 1162 as one of the letters of recommendation addressed to a *topos*. See also Blumell and Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus*, 486–7n11; Wipszycka, *Les ressources*, 13–14. Note also P.Bal. 187.5.

89 Recognized by Bagnall, KAB, 84 "Mani is usually referred to in Greek texts as Manichaios, not as Mani, and some caution may be in order." Pedersen suggests reading "Mani(chaiōn)," "the monastery of the Manichaeans," but states, "the fact that there are no other examples

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minimum of information about monks and monasticism in the oasis. There is only one secure reference to a "μονοστή[ριον]," in the context of the textile industry, and two references to "μοναχ[ός]," one of whom is paying on somebody's behalf. This indicates an early experiment with a monastic institution in the oasis, but a Manichaean affiliation seems to be out of the question. Instead, Petros and Timotheos may have been associated with the monastic church at Dayr Abu Matta (north of Mut), or the domed church at Dayr al-Malak, which is otherwise known as the Monastery of the Angel.[90]

Evoking Groupness: Teaching and Emotional Arousal through Song

What happened during Manichaean communal gatherings was not too different from what happened in the meetings of the Manichaeans' Christian neighbors: they ate, listened to readings, prayed, and sang. The material evidence for a congregational group style, in the form of papyri and wooden tablets with psalms and hymns, indicates potential moments of Manichaeanness that included doctrinal teaching and emotional, embodied, involvement in singing.

Manichaean Psalms and Hymns

Psalms and hymns are known from all over the Manichaean tradition. Fragments have been found in Middle Persian, Parthian, Sogdian, Turkic, Chinese, and Coptic. In these songs, Manichaeans describe themselves as "lovers of hymns" and "lovers of music."[91] They sang and made music for the community,

of this abbreviation makes it very uncertain." Pedersen, "Manichaean Self-Designations," 189; J.D. Dubois, "Y a-t-il eu des moines manichéens dans le site de Kellis?," *Monachismes d'Orient: images, échanges, influences*, ed. F. Jullien and M.-J. Pierre (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 327–37. Preisigkes, *Namenbuch*, gives three instances of names resembling "Mani" in SB I 5662 (Μανης), 1276 (Μανευς), and 5972 (Μανας).

90 G.E. Bowen, "The Church of Dayr Abu Matta and Its Associated Structures: An Overview of Four Seasons of Excavation," in *Oasis Papers 6*, ed. R.S. Bagnall, P. Davoli and C.A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2012), 429–50. Radiocarbon dating of straw samples from the mud brick walls indicate a foundation in the late fourth century. G.E. Bowen, "Christianity in Dakhleh Oasis: An Archaeological Overview," in *Oasis Papers 9*, ed. G.E. Bowen and C.A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2019), 373. The church at Dayr al-Malak is closer to ancient Kellis, but potential datings range from the fourth century (Bowen and Hope on the basis of ceramics), the sixth century (Schijns, Kaper and Kila), to the sixteenth of seventeenth century (Peter Grossmann). G.E. Bowen and C.A. Hope, "The Church at Dayr al Malak in Dakhleh Oasis," in *Oasis Papers 9*, ed. G.E. Bowen and C.A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2019), 419–430.

91 ⲟⲩⲙⲁⲓ̈ϩⲩⲙⲛⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ ⲟⲩⲙⲁⲓ̈ϭⲛϭⲛ̄ 2 PsB. 168.20. On music and songs, see also H.C. Puech, *Sur le manichéisme et autres essais* (Paris: Flammarion, 1979), 179–233; Ries, *L'église gnostique de Mani*, 191–202. Not that a number of these songs in Middle Persian and Parthian are known to have been performed in honour of the local hierachy. This seems to have

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but also for the transempirical beings: "[Y]ou make music to the Aeons and play the lute to the Aeons of the Aeons."[92] The two Coptic volumes of Manichaean psalms, found at Medinet Madi, stand out because of their sheer size and volume. So far, only the second volume has been translated and edited, but some sections of the first volume are known.[93] These documents provide us with the opportunity to compare traditions from various parts of the world and to discover intertextual connections between Syriac hymnology, the Odes of Solomon,[94] and the Mandaean psalms.[95] These complex patterns of appropriation and intertextuality show the influence of various cultural environments on the *Psalmbook*.

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been an Eastern feature, unknown in Western Manichaean sources. C. Leurini, *Hymns in Honour of the Hierarchy and Community, Installation Hymns and Hymns in Honour of Church Leaders and Patrons: Middle Persian and Parthian Hymns in the Berlin Turfan Collection* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017).

92 ϣⲁⲣⲉϭⲛ̄ϭⲛ̄ ⲁⲛⲁⲓⲱⲛ· ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲣ̄ⲕⲓⲑⲁⲣⲁ ⲁⲛⲁⲓⲱⲛ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲓⲱⲛ 2 PsB. 168.27.

93 Schmidt and Polotsky, *Ein Mani-Fund in Ägypten*, 4–90; C.R.C. Allberry, ed., *A Manichaean Psalm-Book: Part II* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1938). Several preliminary translations of psalms from the first part have been published this far, including N.A. Pedersen, "Über einen manichäisch-koptischen Hymnus von der Erlösung der Seele (Das *manichäische Psalmenbuch*, Teil 1: Faksimileausgabe Band 3, Tafel 127–128)," in *The Nag Hammadi Texts in the History of Religions: Proceedings of the International Conference at the Royal Academy of Sciences and Letters in Copenhagen, September 19–24, 1995; On the Occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Nag Hammadi Discovery*, ed. S. Giversen (Kopenhagen: Historisk-filosofiske Skrifter, 2002), 199–210; G. Wurst, "A Dialogue between the Saviour and the Soul (Manichaean Psalmbook Part I, Psalm No. 136)," *Bulletin de la société d'archéologie copte* 35 (1995): 149–60; G. Wurst, "Die Bedeutung der manichäischen Sonntagsfeier (manichäisches Psalmenbuch I, 127)," in *Ägypten und Nubien in spätantiker und christlicher Zeit*, ed. S. Emmel, et al. (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 1999), 563–80; J. Kristionat and G. Wurst, "Ein Hymnus auf die Lichtjungfrau," in *Vom Aramäischen zum Alttürkischen: Fragen zur Übersetzung von manichäischen Texten*, ed. J.P. Laut and K. Röhrborn (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013), 187–98; S.G. Richter, "Ein manichäischer Sonnenhymnus," in *Studia Manichaica IV*, ed. R.E. Emmerick, W. Sundermann, and P. Zieme (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000), 482–93. A section of the Psalms on the Lord's Day is published in S. Giversen, "The Manichaean Texts from the Chester Beatty Collection," in *Manichaean Studies*, ed. P. Bryder (Lund: Plus Ultra, 1988), 265–72; S. Giversen, "The Inedited Chester Beatty Mani Texts," in *Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis: Atti del simposio internazionale*, ed. L. Cirillo and A. Roselli (Cosenza: Marra Editore, 1986), 371–80.

94 H.J.W. Drijvers, "Odes of Solomon and Psalms of Mani," in *Studies in Gnosticism and Hellenistic Religions*, ed. R. van den Broek and M.J. Vermaseren (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 129 considers *Ode of Solomon*, 38 the oldest anti-Manichaean document known so far.

95 T. Säve-Söderbergh, *Studies in the Coptic Manichaean Psalm-Book* (Uppsala: AlmQuist & Wiksells Boktryckeri Ab, 1949); Lieu, *Manichaeism in Mesopotamia*, 69.

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The Coptic psalms from Medinet Madi and Kellis represent a later development, despite the fact that the manuscripts date several centuries before the Parthian, Middle Persian, and Sogdian hymns. The wooden boards and papyri containing Manichaean psalms found at Kellis contain a number of parallels to psalms from the *Psalmbook*. The Kellis psalms from House 3 can be assigned to the 360s CE, while the manuscripts of the Medinet Madi codices have been dated to the early fifth century. The Kellis psalms show traces of an earlier stage in the textual history: some are written in a coarse hand, different from the writing of the professional scribes behind the Medinet Madi *Psalmbook*.[96] Table 14 lists all psalm fragments from Kellis that have a parallel in the published and unpublished Medinet Madi psalms.

TABLE 14 Parallel versions of psalms found at Kellis

Kellis Psalm fragments	Medinet Madi Psalms
T.Kellis II Copt. 2, A2[a]	Psalm 68 (1 PsB. facsimile, plates 97 and 98).
T.Kellis II Copt. 2, A4	Psalm 57 (1 PsB. facsimile, plate 77?).[b]
T.Kellis II Copt. 4, side a	Psalm 222 (2 PsB. 8.6–9.1).
T.Kellis II Copt. 4, side b[c]	Psalm 109 (1 PsB. facsimile, plate 154).
T.Kellis II Copt. 6, side a	Psalm 261 (2 PsB. 75.10–76.25).
T.Kellis II Copt. 7, side a	Psalm 43 (1 PsB. facsimile, plates 57–58 + 65–66)[d]
P.Kellis II Copt. 1, side a	Psalm 246 (2 PsB. 55.3–13).
P.Kellis II Copt. 2, C1	Psalm (1 PsB. facsimile, plate 277–278).[e]
P.Kellis II Copt. 2, C2	Psalm 126 (1 PsB. facsimile, plate 174–175).[f]

a Published in I. Gardner, "An Abbreviated Version of Medinet Madi Psalm LCVIII Found at Kellis: A/5/53 B (Folio 4, Text A2)," in *The Manichaean Nous*, ed. A. van Tongerloo and J. van Oort (Turnhout: Brepols, 1995), 129–38; I. Gardner, "A Manichaean Liturgical Codex," *Orientalia* 62, no. 2 (1993): 30–59; Gardner considers it a "more fluid and oral rendition" in comparison with the Medinet Madi version. Gardner, *KLT1*, 18–24.

b The index for psalm 57 corresponds to the first line of psalm A4, but the photographs from the first part of the *Psalmbook* do not help with further identification. Gardner, *KLT1*, 17.

c The connection between these two psalms on side a and b, suggest that they belonged to a codex with more psalms Gardner, *KLT1*, 33, texts and notes on 33–41.

d Identification by W.P. Funk, reported in Gardner, "The Coptic and Syriac, Christian and Manichaean Texts," 398.

e But see the cautious notes in Gardner, *KLT1*, 64–5.

f According to G. Wurst, cited in Gardner, *KLT2*, 173 addenda and corrigenda to P.Kell. II.

96 Gardner, *KLT1*, xiv.

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In total, twenty-one documents with psalms or hymns have been found (T.Kellis II Copt. 2, 4, 6, 7, P.Kellis II Copt. 1,2,3, P.Kellis II Gr. 91, 92, 94 and P.Kellis VI Copt. 55 and the B fragments of P.Kellis VI Gr. 97). This large number indicates the centrality of singing and psalm copying.[97] Textual and material features reveal that these songs were not meant to be sung privately. The practice of singing antiphonally is described in the Bema psalms: “He that sings a psalm is like them that weave a garland, while they that answer after him are like them that put roses into his hands.”[98] Other indications of psalm performances abound.[99] Many of them are, for example, organized with repetitive refrains (as is visible in 2 PsB. 170.16–40) and each strophe of T.Kellis II Copt. 7 (from House 4) starts earlier on the page than the ensuing lines, helping the singer to discern successive sections in the psalm. The additional “//” at the end of the strophe may have helped singers to identify the last line.[100] Chapter 6 will highlight the abbreviated psalms on wooden tablet T.Kellis II Copt. 2, which resemble sixth-century Egyptian anthologies of psalms and prayers, indicating that they were used within a liturgical setting that included designated readers and singers.

One of the psalms of the Medinet Madi *Psalmbook* includes an explicit reference to communal singing under the leadership of a cantor, as the text clearly indicates various sections: “I will utter the hymn of Amen,” and the entire audience: “[L]et us answer together, Amen. *Purify me*.”[101] In one of the few studies of Manichaean hymnody, Christopher Brunner shows that these indications of united and antiphonal singing point to a communal and embodied experience that became less visible with the emergence of trained choirs and hymn leaders, which are mentioned in seventh- and eighth-century texts, as well as in the work of Augustine.[102] Brunner suggests that officials came to dominate singing in later periods, and that the community’s response was limited to simple acclamations.[103]

97 Gardner, *KLT1*, viii, xiv; Gardner, *KLT2*, 5–6.

98 ⲡ̣ⲉⲧϫⲱ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲯⲁⲗⲙⲟⲥ ⲉϥⲟ ⲛ̄ⲑⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲧϣⲱⲛⲧ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲕⲗⲁⲙ ⲉⲣⲉ ⲛⲉⲧⲟⲩⲱϣⲃⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥⲱϥ ⲟ ⲛ̄ⲑⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲧϯ ⲟⲩⲣⲧ̄ ⲁⲧⲟⲟⲧϥ̄ 2 PsB. 241, 47.15–17. Discussed in Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 139–40.

99 Säve-Söderbergh, *Studies in the Coptic Manichaean Psalm-Book*, 32–40 on refrains. Durkin-Meisterernst and Morano, *Mani’s Psalms*, xxi.

100 Gardner, *KLT1*, 53. Similar indications are found in P.Kellis II Copt. 1 side b.

101 ⲉⲓⲁⲧⲉⲟⲩⲟ ⲡϩⲩⲙⲛⲟⲥ ⲙ̄ⲡϩⲁⲙⲏⲛ ⲙⲁⲣ[ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲱϣⲃⲉ] ϩⲓⲟ̣ⲩ̣ⲥⲁⲡ ϩⲁⲙⲏⲛ *ⲧⲟⲩⲃⲁⲓ̈*. 2 PsB. 186.1–2 (italics added). On singing in unison, see 2 PsB. 36.14, 37.26 and 99.31–4. Säve-Söderbergh, *Studies in the Coptic Manichaean Psalm-Book*, 37–38.

102 C.J. Brunner, “Liturgical Chant and Hymnody among the Manicheans of Central Asia,” *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 130 (1980): 346; Augustine, *Conf.* 3.7.14, 10.33.49; *Faust.* 13.18; 15.15; *Enarrat. Ps.* 140.11.

103 Brunner, “Liturgical Chant,” 347.

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In addition to the Coptic psalm fragments, three or four Greek hymns were found in House 3 (P.Kellis II Gr. 91 (?), 92, 94, 97). The absence of the recognizable psalm format with its doxologies, as well as the size of P.Kellis II Gr. 91, 92 and 94, has led scholars to identify the finds as amulets.[104] Their content, on the other hand, does not resemble other Greek amulets, but features extensive praise of the Father of Light and other Manichaean transempirical beings (in particular in P.Kellis II Gr. 91). Hymns to the Father of Light are well known from the Middle Persian and Parthian texts. There are strong similarities between P.Kellis II Gr. 91, 92 and the first sections of the Parthian *Praise of the Great Ones*.[105] Interestingly, psalm P.Kellis VI Gr. 97, texts B1, is much longer and of a different nature than most of the other published psalms. It praises the "Lady" (πότνια), the communal soul, for her role in the cosmological narrative. The psalm describes her as the soul of the First Man, the Virgin of Light, dressed in the five sons: fire, wind, water, light, and air.[106] A similar praise of the Virgin of Light has recently led to the reinterpretation of P.Oxy. XVII 2074 as a Manichaean hymn. Just like in P.Kellis VI Gr. 97, the hymn focusses on the Virgin of Light's role in the cosmological battle of the First Man against Darkness.[107] Noteworthy is Geoffrey Smith's argument that these songs may have derived from poetical reflection on the *Third Synaxis of the Third Discourse*, one of the unpublished chapters of the Manichaean *Synaxeis* codex from Medinet Madi.[108] If he is correct, the rediscovery and identification of these *potnia* hymns highlights the connections between the Manichaean traditions in Kellis and Oxyrhynchus, as well as the historical layers of transmission behind the better-known collections of Manichaean psalms.

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104 Discussed in Gardner, *KLT1*, 134, 137, and 143; C. Römer and N. Gonis, "Ein Lobgesang an den Vater der Grosse in P.Kellis II 94," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 120 (1998): 299–300. For P.Kellis II Gr. 94, they suggest as a new translation: "O Grund unseres Lobgesangs! Es ist die Zeit der Freude und der vollendeten Lobpreisung! Ruhm, Vater, deinem Namen, und ehre der Größe in alle Ewigkeit! Amen." On the usage of amulets K. Haines-Eitzen, "Late Antique Christian Textual Communities," in *A Companion to Late Antiquity*, ed. P. Rousseau (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 256.

105 Gardner refers to the collection and translation in Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road*, 29–30. The Middle Persian, Parthian and Sogdian psalms are now published as Durkin-Meisterernst and Morano, *Mani's Psalms*, § 398c–450b.

106 Gardner, *KLT2*, 103 and 106–8.

107 G.S. Smith, "A Manichaean Hymn at Oxyrhynchus: A Reevaluation of P.Oxy 2074," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 24, no. 1 (2016): 93.

108 Smith, "A Manichaean Hymn at Oxyrhynchus," 94 building on the remarks by W.P. Funk in the unpublished Synaxis codex.

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Making Manichaeism Real

The psalms from Kellis are important for another reason: they provide an opportunity to consider how a Manichaean identity was communicated and sustained for those who participated in regular communal gatherings, especially because what people do together tends to foster a sense of cohesiveness and commonality. Sociologist Richard Jenkins stresses that enactment of communal ritual can affirm a group's communal identity: "[O]rganised collective identity is endowed, via collective ritual and 'communitas,' with personal authenticity and experiential profundity."[109] In this way, group identifications are solidified as essential or primordial, "we have to be made to *feel* 'we.'"[110] Regular and emotional involvement with Manichaean psalms and prayers provided such opportunities, even though we cannot automatically assume that all participants would walk at a gathering with the same feelings.[111] As I have argued elsewhere, the psalms show five mechanisms of group formation. (1) They had a didactical function, as they provided instruction; (2) they had a pedagogical function, as they directed proper Manichaean behavior; (3) singing songs involved embodied and emotional moments that supported a deeper internalization of the Manichaean way of life; (4) they gave singers a sense of religious power and efficacy, as Manichaean doctrinal texts highlight the power of words, and (5) they constructed a community narrative by commemorating important figures from the community's history.[112]

Just as many religious songs from late antiquity, Manichaean psalms had a didactical function; they aimed to educate both the singers and the wider community about religious doctrines and narratives. Bema Psalm 223, for example, summarized the core elements of the Manichaean myth about the creation of the world, while Bema Psalm 226 narrated Mani's final days.[113] Some of

109 Jenkins, *Social Identity*, 152.

110 Jenkins, *Social Identity*, 152.

111 M.D. Varien and J.M. Potter, "The Social Production of Communities. Structure, Agency, and Identity," in *The Social Construction of Communities. Agency, Structure, and Identity in the Prehispanic Southwest*, ed. M.D. Varien and J.M. Potter (Lanham, MD: Altamira Press, 2008), 3; W.H. Isbell, "What We Should Be Studying: The 'Imagined Community' and the 'Natural Community'," in *The Archaeology of Communities: A New World Perspective*, ed. M. Canuto and J. Yaeger (London: Routledge, 2000), 245–52; N. MacSweeney, "Beyond Ethnicity: The Overlooked Diversity of Group Identities," *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 22, no. 1 (2009): 105.

112 The following paragraphs have been published more elaborately as M. Brand, "Making Manichaeannes 'real': Group formation through song," in *Resonant Faith in Late Antiquity*, ed. A. Avdokin (London: Routledge, forthcoming).

113 M.E. Gordley, *Teaching through Song in Antiquity: Didactic Hymnody among Greeks, Romans, Jews, and Christians* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011). On the polemical function

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these songs were not only didactical, in the sense that they conveyed doctrinal information, but also pedagogical, urging the audience and singers to perform certain rituals and think of themselves in Manichaean terms: "[L]et us be merciful to one another that we may ourselves receive mercy; let us forgive one another that we ourselves be forgiven."[114] The use of the first person plural stimulates the identification of the singer with the group, a well-known linguistic strategy employed in ritualized language to internalize behavioral norms, used alongside other performative strategies such as repetition, antiphonal singing, and singing in unison.[115]

Manichaean groupness was also stimulated by a belief in the immediate efficacy of words and music. Several Early Christian authors warned against the power of songs, melody, and music, which was associated with sexual arousal, drunkenness, and animalistic behavior, with the exception of harmonious music, which conveyed life-giving qualities that counteracted negative bodily passions.[116] Manichaean liturgical and cosmological texts attribute similar powers to singing. In fact, the Manichaean *Psalmbook* portrays the results of pious singing as immediate, happening "today" (м̄пооүе): "[N]umber us also among thy Elect today."[117] At times, the song efficaciously puts Mani in the midst of the community on that "day" (м̄пооү 2 PsB. 41.25).[118] The best description of the performative ritual power of Manichaean psalms and prayers is found in the *Kephalaia* chapter on the Yes and Amen (1 Keph. 122, 290.29–295.8), which conceptualizes ritual speech as a powerful entity, identified with cosmological powers. The chapter describes how the phrases "Yes" and "Amen" were acclaimed after prayers and psalms, and functioned as a "seal" upon the

of some of the Iranian Manichaean psalms see O. Skjærvø, "The Manichean Polemical Hymns in M 28 I," *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 9 (1995): 239–55.

114 ма]рп̄нае н̄н̄нерну ϫеуанае нен ϩωων марн̄ḳ[ω] авал н̄н̄ерну ϫеуакω нен авал ϩωων. 2 PsB. 41.3–4. Discussed in Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 97–98, who calls the genre "lehrhaft-paränetische Psalmen" (he includes Bema Psalms 222, 236, 238 and 239).

115 Wade Wheelock states that "the first person of the ritual text comes to life as the 'I' or 'We' of the participants who speak the liturgy and who then proceed to fashion around themselves a whole world out of language." W.T. Wheelock, "The Problem of Ritual Language: From Information to Situation," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 50, no. 1 (1982): 65.

116 A negative portrayal of music is found in Clement of Alexandria, *Paed.* 2.4.40–41, 2.4.42.1 and 3.11.80.4, who also employs the notion of Christ as "the new song". C.H. Cosgrove, "Clement of Alexandria and Early Christian Music," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 14, no. 3 (2006): 255–82.

117 апне ϩωων [анекcω]ṭп̣ м̄пооүе. 2 PsB. 44.31. "Today" is also used in this way in 2 PsB. 8.18, 21.6, 26.16, 29.9 (?), 41.25, in the Psalms to Jesus. The same use of the present tense is found in Bema Psalm 239 (2 PsB. 39.19–41.7).

118 Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 138–41, citation from page 141.

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requests.[119] This sealing of the prayers happened because Yes and Amen corresponded to the transempirical archetypes Call and Response. Just like these cosmological entities, Yes and Amen were considered portals to liberation (1 Keph. 122, 291. 14–15, cf. 1 Keph. 75, 181.32–183.9), assisting in the ascent of the prayers and songs, sending them upwards into the world of Light.[120] Since the Yes and Amen correspond to cosmological entities, they gather all that is good into one single beautiful image that travels daily to the world of Light. All the "sound of all the people who respond," comes together, "and it fixes and paints and it is formed and becomes a good image."[121] The acclamations are also described as a great power, assisting in prayers of healing, protection, and forgiveness. Their power is "immediate" (ⲛ̣̄ⲧⲟⲩⲛⲟⲩ̣) and it "annuls the lust and the temptation."[122] This power of words and songs, however, also presented a potential threat. Music and melody could corrupt people through the manipulation of their senses (1 Keph. 56).[123] As for the sound of psalms and sermons, "(everywhere) it is heard and is answered, it will bring forth power," even leading people into rest (1 Keph. 139, 342.9–13).[124]

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119 "When the congregation will utter an entreaty and a question, and they all answer and say 'verily and amen,' they shall seal the entreaty...." ⲉⲧⲉⲣⲉ ⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲛⲁⲧⲱⲃϩ̄ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲧⲱⲃϩ ⲙ̣[ⲛ ⲟⲩϣⲓⲛ]ⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥⲉⲟⲩⲱϣⲃⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲥⲉϫⲟⲟⲥ ϫⲉ ⲛⲁⲓ ⲕⲁⲓ̣ ϩ[ⲁⲙⲏ]ⲛ ϣⲁⲩⲣⲥⲫⲣ̣ⲁ̣ⲫⲓⲥ ⲙⲡⲧⲱⲃϩ̄... 1 Keph. 122, 292.5–8. I cite the Coptic text from Funk's edition and the translation from an improved reading (incorporating addenda otherwise unavailable to me) in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 85.

120 A. Böhlig, "Ja und Amen in manichäischer Deutung," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 58 (1985): 59–70.

121 ⲡϩ̄ⲣⲁⲩ ⲛ̣ⲛ̣ⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲱϣⲃⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥⲱϥ ϣⲁϥⲥⲱⲟⲩ[ϩ] ⲁϩⲟⲩⲛ̣ ⲛ̄ϥⲉⲓ ⲁⲛⲉϥⲉⲣⲏⲩ ⲛ̄ϥⲡⲏⲥⲥⲉ ⲛ̄ϥⲍⲱⲅⲣⲁⲫⲉ [ⲁⲛ] ⲛ̄ⲥⲉ[ⲙⲁ]ⲛⲕϥ̄ ⲛ̄ϥⲣ̄ ⲟⲩϩⲓⲕⲱⲛ ⲉⲛⲁⲛⲟⲩⲥ ... 1 Keph. 122, 292.16–17, 18–19.

122 ⲛ̄ⲥ̄ⲟⲩⲱⲥϥ ⲛⲧⲉⲡⲓⲑⲩⲙⲓⲁ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲡⲉⲓⲣⲁⲥⲙⲟⲥ̣ [ⲉ]ⲧⲁϥⲃⲓ ⲁϩ̣ⲣⲏï ⲛ̄ϩⲏⲧϥ̄. 1 Keph. 122, 293.16. The eschatological future described in the *Sermon on the Great War* includes the "sound of righteousness" as an important feature of the peace after the Great War. People will "sing psalms and give glory in every land, singing in every city, in every place, in every province." ⲉⲩⲣ̄ⲯⲁⲗⲉ ⲉⲩϯⲉⲁⲩ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲭⲱ̣[ⲣⲁ ⲭ]ⲱ̣ⲣⲁ: ⲉⲩϩⲱⲥ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲡⲟⲗⲓⲥ ⲡⲟⲗⲓⲥ· ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲙⲁ [ⲙⲁ · ⲕ]ⲁⲧⲁ ⲧⲁ̣ϣ· Hom. 24.11–13.

123 The transformation of the Manichaean body, through psalm singing, prayer, and ascetic practice, is the subject of a number of *Kephalaia* chapters. It is described as the closure of the orifices to loathsome sound and melodies of lust and wickedness and the openness to the sounds of psalms, prayers, and lessons of truth (1 Keph. 56, 143.10–20). Similar warnings against the disruption of rationality by the senses appear in the work of Clement of Alexandria and others. Cosgrove, "Clement of Alexandria and Early Christian Music," 255–82. Augustine, *Conf.* X 33, 49–50 expresses the same fear of getting carried away in music. J.B. Weimer, *Musical Assemblies: How Early Christian Music Functioned as a Rhetorical Topos, a Mechanism of Recruitment, and a Fundamental Marker of an Emerging Christian Identity* (PhD dissertation, University of Toronto, 2016).

124 ... ⲛ̄]ⲥⲉⲥⲁⲧⲙⲉϥ ⲛⲥⲉⲕⲁⲥⲙⲏ ⲁⲣⲁϥ ϣⲁϥⲃ̣[ⲓ ⲟⲩ]ϭⲁⲙ ⲛϩ̣ⲏⲧⲟⲩ 1 Keph. 139, 342.5–7. My translation, closely following Funk.

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Such insider notions pertaining to the efficacy of music and song resonate with modern scholarship stressing the cognitive impact of singing on emotions and memory. Studies of modern Pentecostals highlight how music, speech acts, and ritual gestures shape the intense (and often bodily) experience of God's intimate presence.[125] Verbal action during communal gatherings contributed to the conceptualization – and experience – of the religious group.

Another way in which psalms and prayers contributed to groupness, and to the conceptualization of the transregional Manichaean community, is through their praise of key figures in the salvation history. The psalms elaborate on the life of Mani and draw from examples of other apostles. The *Psalm of Endurance* cites Paul, Andrew, the two sons of Zebedee (John and James), Thomas, and Thecla as predecessors of the apostle Mani, and considers them exemplary figures to be followed by all. Like them, the Manichaeans sang, "we also, my brothers, have our part of suffering."[126] The community itself was immortalized more directly – in a way that resembles songs and inscriptions written in memory of monastic fathers[127] – in the secondary doxology at the end of the psalm:

> Glory and victory to our lord Mani and all his holy elect. Victory to the soul of Pshai, Jmnoute; and the soul of the blessed Maria.[128]

As will be argued in chapter 6, these individuals were not martyrs, but important wealthy catechumens, who were either remembered for their almsgiving,

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125 T.M. Luhrmann, *When God Talks Back: Understanding the American Evangelical Relationship with God* (New York: Vintage Books, 2012), 111–32 and passim.

126 ⲁⲛⲁⲛ ϩⲱⲛⲉ ⲛⲁⲥⲛⲏⲩ ⲟⲩⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲛ ⲧⲛ̄ⲧⲁï̈ⲉ ⲛ̄ϩⲓⲥⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙⲉⲩ. 2 PsB. 143.20 cf. 194.7–21. On the use of apocryphal texts in the Manichaean tradition, see P. Nagel, "Die apokryphen Apostelakten des 2. und 3. Jahrhunderts in manichäischen Literatur," in *Gnosis und neues Testament: Studien aus Religionswissenschaft und Theologie*, ed. K.W. Tröger (Gütersloh: Mohn, 1973), 149–82; J.D. Kaestli, "L'utilisation des actes apocryphes des apôtres dans le manichéisme," in *Gnosis and Gnosticism*, ed. M. Krause (Leiden: Brill, 1977), 107–16. Reevaluation in G. Kosa, "The Protagonist-Catalogues of the Apocryphal Acts of Apostles in the Coptic Manichaica – a Re-Assessment of the Evidence," in *From Illahun to Djeme: Papers Presented in Honour of Ulrich Luft*, ed. E. Bechtold, A. Gulyás, and A. Hasznos (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2011), 107–19.

127 A tradition that continued into the monastic hymns from 14th-century Scetis (at Wādī al-Naṭrūn). S.J. Davis, *Coptic Christology in Practice: Incarnation and Divine Participation in Late Antique and Medieval Egypt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 94–95; S.J. Davis, "Shenoute in Scetis: New Archaeological Evidence for the Cult of a Monastic Saint in Early Medieval Wādī al-Naṭrūn," *Coptica* 14 (2014): 9.

128 ⲟⲩⲉⲁⲩ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲟⲩϭⲣⲟ ⲙ̄ⲡⲡ̄ϫⲁⲓⲥ] ⲡ̣ⲙ̣ⲁ̣ⲛⲓⲭⲁⲓⲟⲥ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛ̣ⲉ̣ϥ[ⲥⲱⲧⲡ̄ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ ⲟⲩ]ϭ̣ⲣⲟ ⲛ̄ⲧⲯⲩⲭⲏ ⲙ̄ⲡϣⲁï̈ ϫⲙ̄[ⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲧⲯⲩⲭⲏ ⲛ̄ⲧⲙⲁⲕ]ⲁⲣⲓ̣ⲁ̣ ⲙ̣̄ⲙ̣ⲁⲣⲓⲁ. 1 PsB. 99.9–11, reading and translation after Gardner, *KLT1*, 24.

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or in the context of death rituals. By placing their names at the end of the psalm, immediately after the first doxology that praised Mani and all his elect, they became part of the narrative and memory of the Manichaean community.[129]

Conclusions

A congregational group style with regular communal gatherings was closely tied to the rise of distinct religious groups. By the fourth century, Kellites and other inhabitants of Roman Egypt must have had some experience with distinct religious groups that gathered with a select number of local individuals while simultaneously claiming transregional connections. The church buildings in Kellis suggest these types of ritual gatherings, although detailed information about who gathered in these buildings is no longer available.

The impact of such gatherings must have depended on their frequency and type. Within the Manichaean tradition, almsgiving, prayer, and a daily ritual meal would have created the opportunity to meet fellow Manichaeans and reiterated affiliation with the community and its goals. Since it is most likely that that the ritual meal was not performed regularly in Kellis, and with almsgiving mostly organized at a distance, the community of elect and catechumens gathered less frequently than expected, and primarily without the elect. The wooden boards and papyri containing psalms and prayers, however, prove that regular meetings did take place. Regardless of the size and frequency of these events, they signified marked moments in time when the participating individuals understood themselves in Manichaean terms and *performed* their religious identification in ritual action. They also show continuity with Manichaean texts and traditions far outside the oasis. Although none of the writers reflected on these occasions in their letters, the embodied and emotional aspects of communal singing likely stimulated an identification with

129 See a similar examination of "socially distributed memory" in M. Choat, "Narratives of Monastic Genealogy in Coptic Inscriptions," *Religion in the Roman Empire* 1, no. 3 (2015): 403–30. At Kellis, this secondary doxology is not attested. Presumably, it was included in the process of collecting songs and constructing the manuscript of the Medinet Madi *Psalmbook*. W.B. Oerter, "Zur Bedeutung der Manichaica aus Kellis für Koptologie und Manichäologie: Vorläufige Anmerkungen," in *Religionswissenschaft in Konsequenz: Beiträge im Anschluß an Impulse von Kurt Rudolph*, ed. R. Flasche, F. Heinrich, and C. Koch (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2000), 106–7. Wurst considers these doxologies as a colophon which was in the course of the transmission added to the psalm. See also the use of "it is finished" (ⲁϥϫⲱⲕ) before the second doxology in 2 PsB. 177.29, cited in Wurst, *The Manichaean Coptic Papyri in the Chester Beatty Library: Psalm Book. Part II, Fasc. 1. Die Bema-Psalmen*, 37nD4.

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the Manichaean narrative and contributed to the formation of a transregional community that had similar ideas and practices.

Of the Manichaeans who lived in Kellis, *who* participated, *how* frequently, and in *which* communal gatherings remain open questions. If the confession rituals were performed each Monday, they would have constituted powerful occasions for identity formation and consolidation, shaped as they were by a disciplinary practice of self-reflection and interpersonal feedback.[130] Makarios's conflict with the deacon may have taken place within this setting. Comparative sociological and psychological studies allow us to argue that regular participation in communal gatherings was an impetus for the activation and internalization of a Manichaean identity that transcended specific moments of connectedness, while simultaneously helping us to recognize the improbability that a modern congregational model was observed in which everyone attended weekly gatherings. The specific historical circumstances, including the frequent travel of some of the Manichaeans, makes it unlikely that the congregational group style was the dominant mode of Manichaeanness in the oasis.

130 BeDuhn, "The Manichaean Weekly Confession Ritual," 271–99.

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CHAPTER 6

Matthaios's Grief: Manichaean Death Rituals

> I was in distress that she died when we were not with her, and that she died without finding the brotherhood gathered around her.
>
> MATTHAIOS TO MARIA[1]

Grief is a strong emotion. Grief over the death of a Manichaean loved one activated all kinds of expectations about care within the family, burial, and commemoration, as well as particular Manichaean notions about the cosmos and the afterlife. Matthaios, the son of Makarios, expressed his grief about the departure of his "great mother" (ⲙⲟ ⲛⲁϭ) in a letter to his mother. His distress seems primarily focused on the absence of "the brotherhood" (ⲧⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲥⲁⲛ) when she died. Somehow, Matthaios would have wanted to be there, maybe even to gather together around her with the brotherhood. These few words, written to express grief about her departure, conveyed real distress, though such expressions also belonged to a conventional genre in papyrus letters. At the same time, this letter opens a window to the world of Manichaean beliefs and rituals pertaining to death and commemoration in the community.

The excavations at Kellis provide two opportunities to examine instances of Manichaeanness related to death and commemoration. In the personal letters, we get a glimpse of the Manichaean attitude toward death and the ritual practices they considered appropriate for protecting and assisting the soul during its journey after life on earth. The songs and prayers found on papyri and wooden boards relate closely to *Kephalaia* chapters about death rituals and cosmological salvation, to the extent that we can differentiate between situations in which the inhabitants of Kellis *performed* Manichaeanness and those in which they did not. The archaeological sources shed light on the development of funerary practices in the village. While some historical studies have posited a strong and direct correlation between burial customs and theological beliefs, arguing that religious groups came to define the social

1 ⲁⲓ̈ⲣ̄ⲗⲩⲡⲏ ⲇ̣ⲉ ϫ̣ⲉ ⲁⲥⲙⲟⲩ ⲁⲛϩⲁⲧⲏⲥ ⲉⲛ ⲁⲩⲱ ϫ̣ⲉ ⲁⲥⲙⲟⲩ ⲁⲙ̄ⲡⲥϭⲛ̄ ⲧⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲥⲁⲛ̣ ⲉⲥⲥⲁⲩϩ ⲁϫ̣ⲱⲥ P.Kellis V Copt. 25.53, 56.

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imaginary in such a way that individual choice surrounding death, commemoration, and burial reflected group-specific customs, many scholars have questioned the direct relationship between material burial remains and religious group identity.[2] This skeptical approach highlights the complex relationship between mortuary practices and social representation, stating that funerary patterns were not the result of deliberate differentiation.[3] In recent work, Éric Rebillard contends that Christian families – rather than the church – remained responsible for burials during the larger part of Late Antiquity.[4] The cemeteries in Kellis, despite their distinct funerary patterns, also point toward a gradual transformation of funerary customs that did not solely relate to the boundaries of group-specific religion, but followed local family-based traditions. This chapter will argue that *some* situations surrounding death were strongly related to a Manichaean group identity, particularly commemorative events, though Manichaean burials remain invisible in the material record of Kellis.

Death and the Deceased in Documentary Papyri

Matthaios was not the first of his family to address situations related to the departure of relatives or acquaintances. News about the health and well-being of relatives was a central concern of papyrus letters, since this was the only way of conveying information to those who stayed behind in the oasis. Matthaios's father, Makarios, also writes to Maria to inform her about the death of an acquaintance: Joubei. Unfortunately, this section of his letter (P.Kellis V

2 U. Volp, *Tod und Ritual in den christlichen Gemeinden der Antike* (Leiden: Brill, 2002); R. Gilchrist, "Transforming Medieval Beliefs: The Significance of Bodily Resurrection to Medieval Burial Rituals," in *Ritual Changes and Changing Rituals: Function and Meaning in Ancient Funerary Practices*, ed. M. Prusac and J.R. Brandt (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2014), 379–96; J.G. Davies, *Death, Burial and Rebirth in the Religions of Antiquity* (London: Routledge, 1999); M. Dunn, *Belief and Religion in Barbarian Europe c. 350–700* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013).

3 A distinction can, therefore, be made between "functional data" and "intentional data," see H. Härke, "The Nature of Burial Data," in *Burial and Society: The Chronological and Social Analysis of Archaeological Burial Data*, ed. C.K. Jensen and K.H. Nielsen (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1997), 19–27. For an introductory overview of the theoretical debates in archaeology, see R. Chapman, "Death, Burial, and Social Representation," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of Death and Burial*, ed. L. Nilsson Stutz and S. Tarlow (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 191–200.

4 E. Rebillard, *The Care of the Dead in Late Antiquity* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009), 36 and 176–8.

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Copt. 24.40) is fragmentary, and it remains unclear whether Joubei was a member of the family or a family friend.[5] At any rate, it is most probable that he was closely associated with Makarios's household in the Nile valley. The subject of Joubei's death returns in one of Apa Lysimachos's letters (P.Kellis V Copt. 30.24, see also his connections to Apa Lysimachos and "the brothers" in P.Kellis V Copt. 24.40–41), and the freight charges incurred because of his death were included in a business account (P.Kellis V Copt. 44.17). The latter indicates that his body was taken to the oasis for proper burial, or that commodities were bought for the funerary arrangements at a price of six hundred talents, as much as ten days of wages for a Kellis weaver.[6] As Tehat may have written the account, it means that several individuals from the village were involved in a single event pertaining to death and burial.[7] One wonders whether Apa Lysimachos's involvement in the situation may have been similar to the role of the "brotherhood" in Matthaios's letter.

Grief also forms the background of other letters. Sometimes death is mentioned only in passing, as when someone orders a warp for his "brother Pshai, who has just died (lit. who left his body)."[8] More dramatic is a letter to Psais, in which a little girl's death is reported: "[T]hen death forced itself on me and carried her away from me. I am powerless. It is not only her – Nonna's children have also died."[9] Yet another letter comes closer to the genre of condolence letters, as it puts an emphasis on the emotional engagement of the author:

5 In P.Kellis V Copt. 20.44–45, Makarios sent condolences to Takoshe for the departure of her husband. Could this have been Joubei?

6 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 61; Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 188n45. It has been suggested to read "camel" at the start of the sentence, in which case 15 camels would cost about 40 talents, which is close to the 50 talents mentioned in line 4. It remains, however, hard to see what 15 camels could have brought for the burial of Joubei. A. Alcock and I. Gardner, "The Coptic Economic Texts from Kellis (Dakhleh Oasis)," in *Ägypten und Nubien in spätantiker und christlicher Zeit*, ed. S. Emmel, et al. (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 1999), 231–40. A parallel text is W.Chr. 499 (= BL 11.126 from the second century), in which a woman sent the body of her mother, prepared for the funeral, with a private boat to her "brother." She explicitly mentions she has paid the shipping costs. Bagnall and Cribiore, *Women's Letters*, 289. Another letter pertaining to the details of the transportation of a corpse is P.Oxy. VII 1068 (reporting a delay and requesting additional support).

7 On the identity of Tehat, see Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 257.

8 ⲡⲁⲥⲁⲛ ⲡϣⲁϊ ⲉⲧ̣ⲁ̣ϩⲉⲓ ⲁ[ⲃ]ⲁⲗ ϩⲛ̄ ⲥⲱⲙⲁ P.Kellis VII Copt. 111.26–27.

9 ⲁ ⲡⲙⲟⲩ̣ ϭⲉ ϫⲓⲧ ⲛ̄ϫ̣ⲛⲁϩ ⲁϥϥⲓⲧⲥ̄ ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲧ` ⲉⲩ ⲧⲉ ⲧⲁϭⲁⲙ` ⲙⲛ ⲉⲣⲉ ⲛ̣̄ⲧⲁⲥ ⲡⲉ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲁⲉ̣ⲧⲥ̄ ⲁⲗⲗⲁ ⲛ̄ⲕⲉϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲟⲛⲛⲁ ⲁⲩⲙⲟⲩ ϩⲱⲟⲩ ⲁⲛ P.Kellis VII Copt. 115.27–30. Earlier in the letter, the author already mentioned the departure of Nonna's children: ⲛ̣ϣⲏ̣ⲣ̣[ⲉ] ⲛ̄ⲛⲟⲛ̣ⲛⲁ ϣⲱⲛⲉ ⲁⲩⲙ̣ⲟⲩ P.Kellis VII Copt. 115.17–18. In P.Kellis VII Copt. 92, Nonna and her daughter were still well. Clearly there are more people deceased here than just Nonna's children. Other letters express a similar emotion, while the events are often beyond our knowledge, as in P.Kellis VII Copt. 68.36 where they are "grieving about….," followed by a lacuna (ⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲣ̄ⲗ̣ⲩⲡⲏ ⲉⲧⲃ̣ⲉ̣ ..). See note at Shisha-Halevy, "Review Article of: Gardner," 275.

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> What indeed will I write to you (pl.) about the great evil that has happened? Comfort the heart of Pamour and Pegosh. No one can do anything. God knows the grief that is in my heart. For you are the ones who ought to comfort him; surely we know that a great evil has befallen him. And we also heard that the old woman died. My heart grieved. Comfort the heart of the others too on her account … Comfort the heart of our brother Papnoute about this evil that has happened.[10]

The two departures in this letter include the death of an "old woman," presumably a village acquaintance related to Papnoute, and the departure of Maria, the wife of Pamour, whose inheritance to their son Horos is mentioned in a Greek document (dated in May 363 CE, P.Kellis I Gr. 30).

The visibility of grief and mourning, as expressed in some of these letters, is not necessarily inconsistent with Manichaean theology. Pedersen has claimed that Manichaeans knew no lament for the dead because they believed that the soul was free after its departure from the body: death was a joyful event![11] The most noteworthy text in this respect is a Middle Persian parable in which a female catechumen is told explicitly not to mourn over the corpse of her son, as this will kill her spiritual son.[12] In the Coptic psalms, the singer urges the audience: "[L]et no man weep for me, neither my brothers nor them that begot me."[13] Another psalm calls for celebration: "[L]et all my kin make festival, because I have received without doubt the true promises of the Paraclete."[14] Although these passages seem to confirm a general interdiction

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10 ⲉⲩ̣ ϭⲉ ⲡⲉϯⲛⲁⲥⲁϩϥ ⲛⲏⲧⲛ̄ ⲉⲧ̣ⲃⲉ ⲡⲛ̣ⲁ̣[ϭ ⲙ̄ⲡ]ⲉⲧϩⲁⲩ ⲉⲧⲁϩϣⲱⲡ̣ⲉ̣ ⲥⲗⲥⲗ ⲡϩ[ⲏⲧ ⲙ̄ⲡⲁⲙ]ⲟⲩⲣ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲉϭⲱϣ ⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲉ ⲣ̣ⲱⲙⲉ ϭ̣ⲁ̣ⲙ̣ ⲁ̣[ⲣ̄ϩ]ⲱ̣ⲃ· ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲡⲉⲧ̀ ⲥⲁⲩⲛⲉ ⲁⲧⲗⲩⲡⲏ ⲉⲧ̀ ϩ̣[ⲛ̄ ⲡ]ⲁϩⲏⲧ̀ ⲛ̄ⲧⲱⲧⲛ̄ ⲅⲁⲣ ⲡⲉⲧ̀ ⲏⲡ ⲁⲥⲗ̄ⲥⲱⲗϥ̄ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲛ ⲧⲛ̄ⲥⲁⲩⲛⲉ ϫⲉ ⲁⲩⲛⲁϭ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲧ̀ϩⲁⲩ ⲉⲓ ⲁϫⲱϥ· ⲁⲩⲱ ⲁⲛ ⲥⲱⲧⲙⲉ ⲁⲛ ϫⲉ ⲁⲧ̀ϩⲗ̄ⲱ ⲉⲓ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ϩⲛ̄ ⲥⲱⲙⲁ ⲁⲡⲁϩⲏⲧ̀ ⲙ̄ⲕⲁϩ ⲥⲗ̄ⲥⲗ̄ ⲡϩⲏⲧ̀ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲕⲁⲩⲉ ϩⲱⲟⲩ ⲁⲛ ⲉⲧⲃⲏⲧⲥ̄…. ⲥⲗ̄ⲥⲗ̄ ⲡϩⲏⲧ̀ⲙ̄ⲡⲛ̄ⲥⲁⲛ ⲡ̣ⲁⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲉⲧⲉ̣ ⲡⲓⲡⲉⲧ̀ϩⲁⲩ ⲉⲧⲁϥϣⲱⲡⲉ P.Kellis VII Copt. 80.7–16, 30–31. The editors suggest interpreting ⲧ̀ϩⲗ̄ⲱ (lit. "old woman") as "matron." Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 123.

11 Pedersen, *Studies*, 201.

12 This story is told in Middle Persian fragment M45, the parable on the female Hearer Xybr'. Published in W. Sundermann, *Mittelpersische und parthische kosmogonische und parabeltexte der Manichäer* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1973), 89–90. Translation in Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road*, 190–1. For more fragments of the same parable and a full discussion, see I. Colditz, "Another Fragment of the 'Parable of the Female Hearer Xybr'?," in *Studia Philologica Iranica: Gherardo Gnoli Memorial Volume*, ed. E. Morano, E. Provasi, and A.V. Rossi (Roma: Scienze e Lettere, 2017), 63–77.

13 ⲙ[ⲡ]ⲱⲣⲧⲉ ⲗⲁⲩⲉ ⲣⲓⲙⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ⲁⲛⲁⲕ ⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛⲁⲥⲛⲏⲩ ⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛⲉⲧⲁⲩϫⲡⲟ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲓ̈ 2 PsB. 75.19–20 (modified translation).

14 ⲙⲁⲣⲉ ⲡⲁⲅⲉⲛⲟⲥ ⲧⲏⲣϥ̄ ⲣ̄ϣⲁⲓ̈ⲉ ϫⲉ ⲁⲓ̈ϫⲓ ⲁϫⲛ̄ϩⲏⲧ ⲥⲛⲉⲩ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ϣⲡⲱⲡ ⲙ̄ⲙⲏⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲡⲁⲣⲁⲕⲗⲏⲧⲟⲥ 2 PsB. 102.28–30. Similar statements are found in 2 PsB. 62.25, 65.15–17, 75.19–20, 84.27–29, 88.16–18, 93.29–30.

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against mourning over the dead, there are exceptions that contradict this rule. Emotional expressions of grief are visible in the lament over Mani's death and at the funeral hymns of important historical figures.[15] The passages in the Coptic psalms are less contemplative as a general rule, and more interested in poetically reminding the reader of the ineffectiveness of mourning. The psalm singer suggests to think about one's own life when change is still possible (2 PsB. 82.21–23). Mourning cannot aid the departed, while almsgiving on his or her behalf positively affects the fate of the soul.[16] The explicit prohibition in the Middle Persian parable should be read with consideration of the Zoroastrian environment, in which lamentations hampered the soul in the afterlife.[17] Its message is that catechumens should not weep, but engage in almsgiving to influence the fate of the soul positively.

Only a few personal letters explicitly address practical considerations and religious rituals after a death. Apart from Matthaios's disappointment about the absence of "the brotherhood" when his great mother died, to which we will return soon, there is a Coptic letter in which Pegosh asks his brother Psais what to do with two orphaned girls after their mother has died (P.Kellis VII Copt. 73). Unlike in Matthaios's letter, there are no expressions of grief, nor does the letter belong to the genre of condolence letters.[18] Instead, Pegosh raises a remarkably explicit religious issue, with implications beyond this life. He writes:

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15 These passages are cited in Colditz, "Another Fragment," 71. She concludes that "from this it becomes clear that there cannot have existed a general interdiction of mourning the dead in Manichaeism." Pedersen suggests that this lament is over those who do not wish to repent and therefore deserve punishment, or belongs to penitential weeping before absolution. He discusses Baumstark's hypothesis that the Bema festival included weeping over Mani's death (Hom. 28.21–30, 71.21–23, 2 PsB. 44.29–30), to conclude that a certain type of lamentation may very well have belonged to the Manichaean practice. Pedersen, *Studies*, 206–10.

16 This would also be my interpretation of one of the two other hagiographical texts cited by Colditz. The female catechumen in M4576/R/i/3–14 (in Parthian) is told to stop mourning and instead she seems to have engaged in "charity" and she "made great [donations of alm]s." See Colditz, "Another Fragment," 73n39. For the evaluation of uncontrolled grief, see T.S. de Bruyn, "Philosophical Counsel Versus Customary Lament in Fourth-Century Christian Responses to Death," in *Rhetoric and Reality in Early Christianities*, ed. W. Braun (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2005), 161–86.

17 Colditz, "Another Fragment," 71–73.

18 E.J. Epp, "The Oxyrhynchus New Testament Papyri: 'Not without Honour except in Their Hometown'?," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 123, no. 1 (2004): 49; C. Kotsifou, "'Being Unable to Come to You and Lament and Weep with You': Grief and Condolence Letters on Papyrus," in *Unveiling Emotions: Sources and Methods for the Study of Emotions in the Greek World*, ed. A. Chaniotis (Wiesbaden: Frans Steiner Verlag, 2012), 389–411.

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> Now then I greet you my beloved brother: "How are things going?" Well, the young man (ⲡ̣ⲕⲟ[ⲩï]) heard that his sister had died and left two daughters behind. When he heard about it, he said: "Write to him that he may send one of them to me," in order that from these (two) daughters I will keep her for you (pl.). He said: "I will take care of her like a daughter." He said it a second time. (After) I had waited, I wrote to him: "You must persuade my father." If you are convinced, then I will arrange the matter. And I myself am amazed that you are persuaded, because he wants to do it head-over-heels (ⲛⲥⲁϫ̣ⲟ), so that you will perform the service of the church, and this is a hard burden at the judgement. If you (sg.) are persuaded, then you (pl.) must bring Pine and he can bring her outside to me.
>
> Greet for me warmly our brother Pfiham. Our brother Theognos will tell you everything. He will speak to you about the girl and … let me (?) […] the matter, so that we may attain life eternal.[19]

Since the exact translation and citations from Pegosh's previous letters are difficult to distinguish, the letter raises more questions than it answers. What exactly was the "service of the church" (ⲡϣⲙϣⲉ ⲛⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ)? Why are the decisions considered a "hard burden at the judgment" (ⲡⲉ̣ⲓⲱⲧⲡ̣ ϫ̣ⲁⲃⲁⲧ ⲁⲡϩⲉⲡ), determining the attainment of "life eternal" (ⲉⲛⲁⲡϩ̣ ⲡ̣ⲱ̣ⲛϩ ⲛϣⲁ̣ⲁ̣ [ⲛⲏϩⲉ….])?

According to the editors, Pegosh wrote about two orphaned girls in the oasis, whose uncle had appointed him as their guardian, and asked his brother Psais for an update about the decision-making process.[20] The explicit religious language suggests that there is more going on. The decision is contested, either because it is done head-over-heels (ⲛⲥⲁϫ̣ⲟ), or, in an alternative reading, because the uncle wants to train one of the orphans as an ecclesiastical scribe: "Well, he wants to make her a 'great scribe,' (saying): 'you will

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19 †ⲛⲟⲩ ϭⲉ ϯϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲙⲙⲁⲕ ⲡⲁ[ⲥⲁⲛ] ⲙⲙⲉⲣⲓⲧ [ϫⲉ] ⲉ̣ϣ̣ ⲧ̣ⲉ ⲑⲉ <ⲉ>ⲡⲓ̣[ⲇ]ⲏ̣ ⲁ̣ ⲡ̣ⲕⲟ[ⲩï] ⲥ̣ⲱ̣ⲧ̣ⲙ̣[ⲉ] ϫⲉ ⲁⲧϥⲥⲱⲛⲉ ⲙⲟⲩ [ⲁ]ⲥⲕⲁ̣ ⲥ̣ⲛⲧⲉ̣ ⲛϣⲉⲣⲉ ⲁϥⲥⲱⲧⲙⲉ ⲙⲁϫⲉϥ ϫⲉ ⲥϩⲉï ⲛⲉϥ ⲛϥ̣ⲧ̣ⲛ̣ⲛ̣ⲁ̣ⲩ̣ ⲟⲩïⲉ ⲛⲏï ⲛϩⲏⲧⲟ̣ⲩ̣ ⲛⲧⲁⲕⲁⲥ ⲛⲏⲧ̣ⲛ̣ⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲓϣⲉⲣⲉ ⲙⲁϫⲉϥ ϯⲛⲁϥⲓ ⲡⲥⲣⲁⲩϣ ⲛ̣ⲑⲉ̣ ⲛⲟⲩϣⲉⲣⲉ ⲁϥϫⲟⲥ̣ ⲛⲟⲩⲥⲁⲡ ⲛⲥⲛⲉⲩ ⲛⲉ̣ⲁïⲁϩⲉ ⲁïⲥϩⲉⲓ ⲛⲉϥ ϫⲉ ⲕⲛⲁⲡⲓⲑⲉ ⲙⲡⲁ̣ïⲱⲧ ïϣϫⲉ ⲕ̣ⲏ̣ⲕ ⲛϩⲏⲧ ⲧⲁ<ⲣ̄>ⲡϩⲱⲃ ⲁⲩⲱ ϯ<ⲣ̄>ⲙ̣ⲁ̣ⲓ̣ϩ̣ⲉ ϩⲱ̣ⲧ̣ ϫ[ⲉ] ⲕⲡⲓⲑⲉ ⲉⲡⲓⲇⲏ ⲉϥⲟⲩⲁϣⲥ ⲁⲉⲥ ⲛⲥⲁϫ̣ⲟ ϫⲉⲧⲛⲁⲣ ⲡϣⲙϣⲉ̣ ⲛⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲡⲉ̣ⲓⲱⲧⲡ̣ ϫ̣ⲁⲃⲁⲧ ⲁⲡϩⲉⲡ ïϣϫⲉ ⲕⲡⲓⲑⲉ ⲛïⲉ ⲧⲉⲧⲛⲁⲛ ⲡ̣ⲓⲛ̣ⲉ̣ ⲛϥⲛⲧⲥ ⲛⲏï ⲁⲃⲁⲗ· ϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲡ̣ⲛ̣ⲥⲁⲛ ⲡϥⲓ̣ϩⲁⲙ ⲡⲛⲥⲁⲛ ⲑⲉⲟ̣ⲅ̣ⲛ̣ⲱⲥ [ϥ]ⲛ̣ⲁⲧ̣ⲉⲩⲟ ϩⲱⲃ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲁⲣⲁⲕ ϥⲛⲁⲥⲉϫⲉ [ⲛ]ⲙ̣ⲙⲉⲕ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲧⲕⲟⲩï ⲁⲩⲱ … ⲧ̣ⲣⲁ̣.ⲧⲓ. […]ⲁ ⲡϩⲱⲃ ⲉ[ⲧⲁï ϫ]ⲉ ⲉⲛⲁⲡϩ̣ ⲡ̣ⲱ̣ⲛϩ ⲛϣⲁ̣ⲁ̣[ⲛⲏϩⲉ….] P.Kellis VII Copt. 73.6–24, which constitutes the entire body of the letter (modified translation). One of the main issues with the translation is to determine who is talking and where the direct quotations begin and end.

20 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 84–5.

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perform the service of the church.'"[21] In this reading of the text, she was given to the church to be trained as one of the new elect (1 Keph. 80, discussed in chapter 1). The advantage of choosing this religious interpretation is that it would explain the explicit religious language about life eternal, but the phrase "service of the church" (ⲡϣⲙϣⲉ ⲛⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ) in Pegosh's letter is not identical with the *Kephalaia* expression "the work of the catechumens" (ⲡϩⲱⲃ ⲛⲧⲉ ⲧⲙⲛⲕⲁⲧⲏⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ). What is visible, despite our uncertainty about the situation, is the impact a sudden departure could have on families in the oasis, not only in terms of emotional and practical considerations, but also in terms of explicit religious problems that had to be discussed with the head of the household and other relatives.

Before returning to the letter of Matthaios, we must acknowledge that some of his fellow Manichaeans in the village considered death to be an important moment with ritual consequences and great emotional intensity. Some of them were even willing to pay the freight costs to transport the body to the oasis (as in the case of Joubei). Matthaios also reports about a departure outside the oasis, during the period when his brother Piene traveled with the Teacher. He writes to his mother:

> Thus, I have been here in Antinoou since the day when the Teacher came south; and I have been unable to find a way to go L…., nor to visit my father, because they are mourning in the city for the blessed soul of my great mother. We are remembering her very much. And I was in distress that she died when we were not with her, and that she died without finding the brotherhood gathered around her. Do not neglect to write to us about your health.[22]

The remainder of the letter mostly consists of greetings, and does not mention the death and commemoration of this woman again.

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21 ⲉⲡⲓⲇ̣ⲏ ⲉϥⲟⲩⲁϣⲥ ⲁⲉⲥ ⲛⲥⲁⲭ̣ⲟ ϫⲉ ⲧⲛⲁⲣ ⲡϣⲙϣⲉ̣ ⲛⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ (modified translation). I am grateful to Renate Dekker and Jennifer Cromwell for discussing this passage with me. Part of the argument hinges on the reading of ⲛⲥⲁⲭ̣ⲟ or ⲛⲥⲁϫ̣ⲟ. Crum, *CD*, 384a gives "great scribe" or "village official" as translations, but the editors of the papyrus note as alternative "officially."

22 ⳨ⲛ̄ⲛⲓⲙⲁ ϭⲉ ⲛ̄ⲁⲛⲧⲓⲛⲟⲟⲩ ϫ̣ⲛ̄ ⲫ[ⲟⲟⲩ] ⲉ̣ⲧ̣ⲁ ⲡⲥⲁϩ ⲉⲓ ⲁⲣⲏⲥ ⲙ̄ⲡⲓϣϭⲛ̄ ⲑⲉ ⲁⲃⲱⲕ ⲁⲗ̣.[..] ⲟ̣ⲩ̣ⲇ̣ⲉ ⲁ̣ϭⲙⲡϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲁïⲱⲧ` ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ϫⲉ ⲥ̣ⲉ̣ⲣ̣̄ⲱⲕⲧⲓⲣⲟⲩ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧⲡⲟⲗⲓⲥ ⲉⲧ̣ⲃ̣ⲉ ⲧ̣ⲯ̣ⲩ̣ⲭⲏ̣ [ⲁ]ⲛ̣ ⲙ̣̄ⲙ̣ⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲁ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲙⲟ ⲛⲁϭ ⲧⲛ̄ⲉⲓⲣ̣ⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲥ̣ⲣ̄ⲡⲙⲉⲩⲉ ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ ⲁïⲣ̄ⲗⲩⲡⲏ ⲇⲉ ϫⲉ ⲁⲥⲙⲟⲩ ⲁⲛϩⲁⲧⲏⲥ ⲉⲛ ⲁⲩⲱ ϫⲉ ⲁⲥⲙⲟⲩ ⲁⲙ̄ⲡⲥϭⲛ̄ ⲧⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲥⲁⲛ̣ ⲉⲥⲥⲁⲩϩ ⲁϫⲱⲥ ⲙ̄ⲡⲣⲣ̄ⲁⲙⲉⲗⲉⲓ ⲁⲥϩⲉï ⲛⲉⲛ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲡⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲟⲩϫⲉïⲧⲉ. P.Kellis v Copt. 25. 48–56.

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The situation was one of constant traveling. Matthaios wrote from Antinoou, where he parted ways with the Teacher and Piene after (?) they had arrived from Alexandria (as their father writes, "some brothers have come from Alexandria recently").[23] Matthaios was unable to travel further to visit his father, or go to his destination (the place name is unfortunately no longer legible). The departure of the great mother is introduced as the reason for his delay, indicating that her death carried weight for his travel companions. Particularly troublesome is the absence of "the brotherhood" during her last moments. This brotherhood refers to a collective who Matthaios wished could have gathered around her at her deathbed. In the version of Mani's *Epistles* found in Kellis, "brotherhood" is used as a designation for the elect (P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 72.01 and 54.61). These absent elect may have been those traveling with the Teacher – or even Matthaios's own travel companions who could not be there in time.[24]

Matthaios's "great mother" was more than a biological grandmother, as her departure affected not only his travel plans, but also caused mourning in the city.[25] She may have been a wealthy catechumen whose death deserved special attention because of her financial or material support to the elect and catechumens. This idea is supported by similarities between the formulaic expression "the blessed soul of my great mother" (ⲧ̣ⲯⲩ̣ⲭⲏ̣ [ⲁ]ⲛ̣ ⲙ̣̄ⲙ̣ⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲁ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲙⲟ ⲛⲁϭ) in Matthaios's letter and the secondary doxology in the *Psalmbook*, which praises "the soul of the blessed Maria" (ⲧⲯⲩⲭⲏ ⲛ̄ⲧⲙⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲁ ⲙⲁⲣⲓⲁ). The blessed souls at the end of the psalms may have been catechumens who financed the production of these psalms.[26] Their names were included at the end of the psalms because of their pious contributions as donors, or because their names were

23 ⲁ ϩⲛ̄ⲥⲛⲏⲩ ⲉⲓ ⲛ̄ⲣⲁⲕ̣ⲁ̣ⲧⲉ ϯⲛⲟⲩ P.Kellis V Copt. 24.23–24. Dubois, "Une lettre du manichéen Matthaios," 235.

24 For Gardner, "brotherhood" designates the elect only. Dubois includes the catechumens. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 51; Dubois, "Une lettre du manichéen Matthaios," 235.

25 Kristionat, *Zwischen Selbstverständlichkeit und Schweigen*, 103. Dubois translated "grand-mère," a grandmother in the biological sense. Dubois, "Une lettre du manichéen Matthaios," 230; Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 193 "probably 'great' mother means 'grandmother', rather than 'famous'." I would consider the adjective great a form of praise, just like *ama* in one of the other letters.

26 Allberry, *A Manichaean Psalm-Book*, xx, n4; Säve-Söderbergh, *Studies in the Coptic Manichaean Psalm-Book*, 28–31; Kristionat, *Zwischen Selbstverständlichkeit und Schweigen*, 103; Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 56; S.G. Richter, *Exegetisch-literarkritische Untersuchungen von Herakleidespsalmen des koptisch-manichäischen Psalmenbuches* (Altenberge: Oros Verlag, 1994), 13–17. Both Wurst and Richter re-interpret the ⲙⲁⲣⲧⲩⲣⲉ in 2 PsB. 157.13 and 2 PsB. 173.12 as another personal name, cf. 1 PsB. facsimile page 294 as ⲧⲯⲩⲭⲏ ⲙⲙⲁⲣⲧⲩⲣⲓⲟⲥ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲙⲁ̣ⲣⲓ̣ⲁ̣. *Contra* Lieu, *Manichaeism in Mesopotamia*, 97.

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read during commemorations after death. This latter option is made explicit in one psalm, where the singers sang for "all the souls that have laid off the body of death."[27] Since Matthaios's phrasing resembles these formulas, his "great mother" may have been one of these wealthy donors, whose almsgiving resulted in a special status that asked for Manichaean commemoration rituals that brought "rest" to the deceased.

Songs and Prayers for the Deceased

Although Matthaios does not elaborate on the rituals performed at Antinoou, his letter points to two separate ritualized situations: a gathering with the elect at the moment of departure, and a commemoration ritual to support the ascent of the soul.

Commemorating the Departed: Supporting the Soul

Two *Kephalaia* chapters shed light on Manichaean commemoration rituals, elaborating on the repose brought by the prayers of the elect. In 1 Keph. 115 (270.25–280.19), one of the catechumens asks whether their prayer has positively contributed to the deceased's journey. Mani answers and explains the power of the prayers of the elect, who can intercede on behalf of the dead just as the Mother of Life prayed on behalf of the First Man (1 Keph 115, 274.22–29). As heirs of cosmological history, Manichaean elect and catechumens can pray for the salvation of the deceased. Combined with prayer, family members should give alms on behalf of the departed:

> Who had left his body (i.e., died), they … him, as he had … alms on his behalf and a remembrance for his brother; whether his father or his mother or his son or else his daughter or his relative who shall leave his

27 ⲙ̄ⲯⲩⲭⲁⲩⲉ ⲧⲏ[ⲣ]ⲟ[ⲩ] ⲛⲉⲧⲁⲩⲃⲁϣⲟⲩ ⲙ̄ⲡⲥⲱⲙⲁ ⲙ̄ⲡⲙⲟⲩ. Psalm 129 from 1 PsB. 180 at the facsilime edition, cited in Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 56n9. I see the donation-hypothesis strengthened by the colophon of 2 PsB. 113 in which the first hand adds the lines "remember me, my beloved, I pray you remember me," and a second hand, "remember me my beloved, I." Cited and discussed in P. Nagel, "Der ursprüngliche Titel der manichäischen 'Jesuspsalmen'," in *Gnosisforschung und Religionsgeschichte: Festschrift für Kurt Rudolph zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. H. Preißler and H. Seiwert (Marburg: Diagonal-Verlag, 1994), 210; Richter, *Exegetisch-literarkritische Untersuchungen*, 16–17. Colditz gives a similar explanation for donor names in Middle-Iranian Manichaean hymns. I. Colditz, "On the Names of 'Donors' in Middle Iranian Manichaean Texts," in *Manichaeism East and West*, ed. S.N.C. Lieu (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 64–5.

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> body. He has made alms for his … from him. He did not lack his hope … but he enacted for him a remembrance ……. of the church.[28]

In this way, when a household member expressed "his love (ⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ) toward him and he performed a remembrance in the church on his behalf," this was believed to aid the soul of the deceased.[29]

The performance of a "remembrance" (ⲣ̄ⲡⲙⲉⲟⲩⲉ) for the soul of a departed was aimed specifically at the catechumens, who, with this ritual, could be released from a cycle of "thousands of afflictions and tens of thousands of transmigrations."[30] While elect could be saved in a single lifetime, catechumens had to go through a cycle of transmigration (1 Keph. 90, 91 and 92). In addition to these two paths, Manichaeans believed that in exceptional situations a perfect catechumen could be saved "in a single body" without having to be reborn (1 Keph. 91). This perfect catechumen's deeds would be purified during the ascending journey of his soul in a similar way to the cleansing of the Living Soul in the food of the elect. The prayers and alms of relatives helped the soul in this process, shortened the cycle of transmigration, and gave "rest" (ⲙ̄ⲧⲁⲛ) to the deceased, who were said to be entangled in affliction (1 Keph. 115). A second *Kephalaia* chapter describes prayers (ϣⲗⲏⲗ), almsgiving (ⲧⲙⲛⲧⲛⲁⲉ), love gifts (ⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ), offerings (ⲡⲣⲟⲥⲫⲟⲣⲁ), and making remembrance (ⲣ̄ⲡⲙⲉⲟⲩⲉ, all in 1 Keph. 144).[31] Alms were perceived as powerful, giving life to "the soul of their limbs which will leave their body."[32] For this purpose, catechumens and

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28 [.]ⲉ ⲉⲧⲁ̣ϥⲉⲓ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ϩⲙ ⲡⲉϥⲥⲱⲙⲁ ⲁⲩ … ⲧϥ̄ ⲉⲁϥ..[.]ⲟⲩⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲛⲁⲉ ϩⲁⲣⲁϥ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲣ̄ⲡⲙⲉⲩⲉ ⲁⲡⲉϥⲥ[ⲁⲛ ⲉⲓⲧⲉ] ⲡⲉϥⲓ̈ⲱⲧ ⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲧⲉϥⲙⲉⲉⲩ ⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲡⲉϥϣ[ⲏ]ⲣⲉ [ⲙ]ⲙⲁⲛ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁϥ [ⲧⲉϥ]ϣⲉⲉⲣⲉ ⲏ ⲡⲉϥⲥⲩⲅⲅⲉⲛⲏⲥ [ⲉⲧ]ⲉ [ϣⲁ]ϥ̣ⲉⲓ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ϩⲙ̄ ⲡⲉϥⲥⲱⲙⲁ ⲁϥⲣ̄ⲟⲩⲙ̄ⲛⲧⲛⲁⲉ ϩⲁ [ⲡⲉϥ ……..]ⲧⲟⲟⲧϥ̄ ϩ̣ⲱϥ ⲙⲡⲉϥϣⲁⲁⲧ ⲧⲉϥϩⲉⲗ[ⲡⲓⲥ…..]..ϥ ⲁ̣ⲗⲗⲁ ⲁϥⲉⲓⲣⲉ ⲛⲉϥ ⲛⲟⲩⲣ̄ⲡⲙⲉⲟⲩⲉ ⲉ.ⲁ[….] ⲛⲧⲉⲕ̣ⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ 1 Keph. 115, 277.20–27. Where possible I cite Funk's improved readings, which are only accessible to me through S.G. Richter, *Die Aufstiegspsalmen des Herakleides* (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 1997).

29 ⲛ̄ⲧⲉϥⲁ̣ⲅⲁⲡⲏ ϣⲁⲣⲁϥ ⲛ̄ϥⲣ̄ⲟⲩⲣ̄ⲡⲙⲉⲟⲩⲉ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ϩⲁⲣⲁϥ … 1 Keph. 115, 279.14–16. With Pedersen, I take *agape* here to represent a convergence of the virtue of love, a meal, and almsgiving. Pedersen, "Holy Meals," 1284.

30 The entire passage reads: ⲉ[…]ⲉⲧⲉⲛⲁⲉⲓⲣⲉ ⲛⲉⲥ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲣ̄ⲡⲙⲉⲟⲩⲉ ⲉⲧⲉⲧⲉⲛⲥⲱⲧⲉ ⲙⲙ̣[ⲁ]ⲥ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ϩ̄ⲛ̄ ϣⲟ ⲛⲑⲗⲓⲯⲓⲥ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ϩⲛⲧⲃⲁ ⲙ̄ⲙⲉⲧⲁⲅⲅⲓⲥⲙ[ⲟ]ⲥ 1 Keph. 115, 280.12–14.

31 Richter, *Aufstiegspsalmen*, 67–9. Augustine also alludes to the existence of death rituals, but never informs us about the details. In *Mor. Man.* 17.55, he mentions that the prayers and songs of the elect were beneficial for the souls.

32 The entire sentence is ϫⲉ ⲉⲧⲉⲧⲛⲁⲉⲉⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲧⲛⲱⲛϩ̄ ⲛ̄ϩⲏⲧⲥ̄ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ̣ⲧ̣ⲛⲧⲛϩⲟ ⲁⲛ ⲛⲙⲯⲩⲭⲁⲩⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲙⲉⲗⲟⲥ ⲉⲧ[ⲛⲁ]ⲉⲓ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲟⲩⲥⲱⲙⲁ 1 Keph. 144, 348.9–11 (Funk translates "damit ihr ihn veranstaltet und durch ihn lebendig werdet und auch die Seelen eurer Glieder, die ihren Körper verlassen werden, lebendig macht"). S.G. Richter, "Die manichäische Toten- oder Seelenmesse," in *Ägypten und Nubien in spätantiker und christlicher Zeit*, ed.

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elect worked together; catechumens brought their pure alms forward and put them on the table and the elect consumed the food:

> (At) the moment, when they will take it into their image (ϩⲓⲕⲱⲛ), they will pray in its power and they will sing psalms, and they will say the things that are hidden and the wisdom of God, and they will pray for mercy and they will ask for power in their holy prayer to God, in order that it will become a helper to him on account of whose name they made it. A power will be sent out from the God of Truth, and it will come and help him, on whose account they make this offering (ⲡⲣⲟⲥⲫⲟⲣⲁ).[33]

Prayer, almsgiving, reading, and preaching from the "secrets and wisdom of God" were thus combined with psalm singing and contributed to a great power that would help the soul of the deceased. The participation of both elect and catechumens is also visible in Matthaios's letter, where he expresses his distress about his "great mother's" death, and says "we were not with her," including himself – as one of the catechumens – in the required ritual context.[34]

The Manichaean *Psalmbook* contains two sets of psalms related to death and commemoration. The Psalms of Herakleides and the Ascension Psalms (previously known as the Psalms of Jesus, but now reconsidered as ⲯⲁⲗⲙⲟⲓ ⲁⲛⲁⲗⲏⲯⲉⲱⲥ)[35] were sung from the perspective of the soul and describe the afflictions and threats of the soul's journey.[36] Siegfried Richter's analysis of the Psalms of Herakleides, and his reconstruction of the stages of the ascent

S. Emmel, et al. (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 1999), 535. He states "diese Opferfeier, mit dem Ziel einer aufsteigenden Seele zu helfen, können wir als manichäische Seelenmesse bezeichnen."

33 ⲡⲛⲉⲩ ⲉⲧⲉϣⲁⲩϫⲓⲧⲥ̄ ⲁϩⲟ̣[ⲩⲛ] ⲁ̣ⲧ̣ⲟⲩϩⲓⲕⲱⲛ ⲉϣⲁⲩϣⲗⲏⲗ ϩⲛ ⲧⲉⲥϭⲁⲙ ⲛ̄ⲥⲉⲣⲯⲁⲗ̣ⲉ̣ ⲛ̣ⲥ̣ⲉ̣ⲧ̣ⲉⲟⲩⲟ ⲛⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲧϩⲏⲡ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲧⲥⲟⲫⲓⲁ ⲙ̄ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥ̣ⲉ̣[ⲧ]ϣ̣ⲃ̣ϩ̣ ⲛⲟⲩⲛⲁⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥⲉⲁⲓⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩϭⲁⲙ ϩⲙ̄ ⲡⲟⲩϣⲗⲏ̣ⲗ̣ ⲉ̣ⲧ̣ⲟ̣ⲩ̣ⲁ̣ⲃⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲛ̄ ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ϫⲉⲥⲛⲁϣⲱⲡⲉ ⲛ̄ⲃⲟⲏⲑⲟⲥ ⲙ̣ⲡ̣ⲉ̣ⲓ̣̈ ⲉⲧⲁⲩⲉⲓ̈ⲧⲥ̄ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲡⲉϥⲣⲉⲛ ϣⲁⲩⲧⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲩ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩϭⲁⲙ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ϩⲁⲧⲙ̄ ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ ⲧⲙⲏⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥⲉⲓ ⲛ̄ⲥⲣ̄ⲃⲟⲏⲑⲓ ⲁⲡⲉⲓ̣̈ ⲉ̣ⲧ̣ⲉ̣ϣⲁⲩⲉⲓⲣⲉ ϩⲁⲣⲁϥ ⲛϯⲡⲣⲟⲥⲫⲟⲣⲁ 1 Keph. 144, 347 2–9 (my translation, I thank Renate Dekker for discussing this passage with me).

34 ⲁⲥⲙⲟⲩ ⲁⲛϩⲁⲧⲏⲥ ⲉⲛ P.Kellis v Copt. 25.48–55. The first person plural does not indicate Matthaios's position among the elect, but the absence of fellow catechumens.

35 Nagel, "Der ursprüngliche Titel," 215. Despite this change in name, it remains important to recognize Jesus's role guiding souls toward the Light. Rose, *Die manichäische Christologie*, 144–153; BeDuhn, "The Manichaean Jesus," 63.

36 Villey also locates two Psalms of the Wanderers in this context: 2 PsB. 154–155.15 and 167.23–168.19 Villey, *Psaumes des errants*, 33, 299–304 and 379–83. The content of the songs is indeed strongly related to the other psalms, although it is difficult to relate them to the stages identified by Richter. See also the Parthian hymns in M. Boyce, *The Manichaean Hymn-Cycles in Parthian* (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), 8–15.

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of the soul, rests heavily on a Coptic hymn – or prayer – found on a wooden board from House 3 (T.Kellis II Copt. 2, A5), which we will call the *Seven stages hymn*. The text reads:

> I will pray to the Third Ambassador. He sent unto me Jesus the Splendour, the apostle of light, the redeemer of souls. He entrusted me to the Light Mind, the Virgin of Light. The spirit of truth, our Lord Manichaios, he gave to me his knowledge. He made me strong in his faith. He has fulfilled me in his commandments. The image of my counterpart came unto me, with her three angels. She gave to me the garment and the crown and the palm and the victory. He took me to the judge without any shame; for what he entrusted to me I have perfected. I washed in the Pillar.[37] I was perfected in the Perfect Man. They gave me my first mind in the living atmosphere. I rose up to the ship of living water; unto the father, the First Man. He gave me his image, his blessing, and his love. I rose up to the ship of living fire; unto the Third Ambassador, the Apostle of Light, the good Father. They ferried me up to the land of light, to the first righteous one and the Beloved of the Lights. I came to rest in the kingdom of the household (?); for the Father of the Lights has revealed to me his image.[38]

37 G. Wurst, "Initiationsriten im Manichäismus," in *Ablution, Initiation, and Baptism: Late Antiquity, Early Judaism, and Early Christianity I*, ed. D. Hellholm, et al. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), 148. The Manichaeans spiritualized the Christian practice of baptism into an "eschatologischen Taufe" which contributed to the forgiveness of sins. For the interpretation of the celestial baptism and the way these textual references were related to ritual practice, see Richter's critique on Mirecki. Richter, *Aufstiegspsalmen*, 140ff; P.A. Mirecki, "Coptic Manichaean Psalm 278 and Gospel of Thomas 37," in *Manichaica Selecta I*, ed. A. van Tongerloo and S. Giversen (Leuven: International Association of Manichaean Studies, 1991), 243–62.

38 ⲁ̣ⲉ̣ⲓ̣ⲛⲉⲧⲱⲃϩ ⲙⲡⲙⲁϩϣⲁⲙⲧ ⲙ̄ⲡⲣⲉⲥⲃⲉⲩⲧⲏⲥ ⲁϥⲧⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲩ ϣⲁⲣⲁⲉⲓ ⲛ̄ⲓⲏ̄ⲥ̄ ⲡⲡⲣ̄ⲉⲓⲉ ⲡⲁⲡⲟⲥⲧⲟⲗⲟⲥ ⲙ̄ⲡⲟⲩⲁⲉⲓⲛⲉ ⲡⲣⲉϥⲥⲱⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲯⲩⲭⲁⲟⲩⲉ ⲁϥ̣[ⲧⲉⲉ]ⲧ ⲁⲧⲟⲧϥ ⲙ̄ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲥ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲁ̣ⲉ̣ⲓⲛⲉ ⲧⲡⲁⲣⲑⲉⲛⲟⲥ ⲙ̄ⲡⲟⲩⲁⲉⲓⲛⲉ <ⲡ>ⲡ̄ⲛ̄ⲁ̄ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ ⲧⲙⲏⲉ ⲡⲛ̄ϫⲁⲓⲥ ⲡⲙⲁⲛⲓⲭⲁⲓⲟⲥ ⲁϥϯ ⲛⲏⲉⲓ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉϥⲥⲁⲩⲛⲉ ⲁϥⲧⲁϫⲣⲁⲉⲓ ϩⲙ̄ ⲡⲉϥⲛⲁϩⲧⲉ ⲁϥϫⲱⲕ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲉⲓ ϩⲛ̄ ⲛⲉϥⲉⲛⲧⲟⲗⲁⲩⲉ ⲁ ⲑⲓⲕⲱⲛ ⲙ̄ⲡ[[ⲁⲥⲁ]]ⲉⲓϣ ⲉⲓ ϣⲁⲣⲁⲉⲓ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲉⲥϣⲁⲙⲧ ⲛ̄ⲁⲅⲅⲉⲗⲟⲥ ⲁⲥϯ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ [[ⲛ̄ⲧϩ]]ⲃ̄ⲥⲱ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲕⲗⲁⲙ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲃⲁⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡϭⲣⲟ ⲁϥϫⲓⲧ ⲁⲣⲉⲧϥ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉ ⲕⲣⲓⲧⲏⲥ ⲁϫⲛ̄ ⲗⲁⲟⲩⲉ ⲛ̄ϣⲓⲡⲉ ϫⲉ ⲡⲉⲧⲁϥⲧⲉⲉϥ ⲁⲧⲟⲟⲧ ⲁⲉⲓϫⲱⲕ ⲙⲙⲁϥ ⲉⲃⲁⲗ ⲁⲉⲓϫⲱⲕⲙ̄ ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲥⲧⲩⲗⲟⲥ ⲁⲩϫⲁⲕⲧ ϩⲙ̄ ⲡⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲉⲧϫⲏⲕ ⲉⲃⲁⲗ ⲁⲩϯ ⲛⲏ<ⲓ̈> ⲙ̄ⲡⲁϣⲁⲣⲡ ⲛ̄ⲛⲟⲩⲥ ϩⲙ̄ ⲡⲁⲏⲣ ⲉⲧⲁⲛϩ ⲁⲉⲓⲧⲁⲉⲓⲗⲉ ⲁⲡϫⲁⲉⲓ ⲙ̄ⲡⲙⲁⲟⲩ ⲉⲧⲁⲛϩ ϣⲁ ⲡⲓⲱⲧ ⲡϣⲁⲣⲡ̄ ⲛ̄ⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲁϥϯ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ⲛ̄ⲧϥϩⲏⲕⲱⲛ ⲡϥⲥⲙⲁⲙⲁ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲧⲉϥⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ ⲁⲉⲓⲧⲁⲉⲓⲗⲉ ⲁⲡϫⲁⲉⲓ ⲛ̄ⲧⲥⲉⲧⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲛϩ ϣⲁ ⲡⲙⲁϩϣⲁⲙⲧ ⲙ̄ⲡⲣⲉⲥⲃⲉⲩⲧⲏⲥ ⲡⲁⲡⲟⲥⲧⲟⲗⲟⲥ ⲙ̄ⲡⲟⲩⲁⲉⲓⲛⲉ ⲡⲓⲱⲧ ⲛⲁⲅⲁⲑⲟⲥ ϩⲁⲩϫⲓ ⲛⲉⲓⲟⲣⲉ ⲙⲙⲁⲉⲓ ⲁϩⲣⲏⲓ̈ ⲁⲧⲭⲱⲣⲁ ⲙ̄ⲡⲟⲩⲁⲉⲓⲛⲉ ⲁⲣⲉⲧϥ ⲙ̄ⲡⲁⲣⲭⲓⲇⲓⲕⲁⲓⲟⲥ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲙⲉⲣⲓⲧ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲁⲉⲓⲛⲉ ϩⲁⲉⲓⲙ̄ⲧⲁⲛ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲉⲓ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲣ̄ⲟ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲉⲓ ϫⲉ ϩⲁ ⲡⲓⲱⲧ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲁⲉⲓⲛⲉ ⲟⲩⲱⲛϩ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ⲉⲃⲁⲗ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉϥϩⲏⲕⲱⲛ. The translation is found in Gardner, *KLT1*, 14–15. An earlier translation was included in Gardner, "A Manichaean Liturgical Codex," 30–59.

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In contrast to the Psalms of Herakleides, which touch upon most – but not all stages – the *Seven stages hymn* lists all stages of the soul's ascension following death. This includes: (1) identification with the transempirical double (or twin) and the aid of three angels, (2) the judge, (3) the Pillar and the Perfect Man, (4) the ship of the living water (the moon) and the First Man, (5) the ship of the living fire (the sun) and the Third Ambassador, (6) the land of Light and the Beloved of the Lights, (7) and finally, the Rest and the Father of the Lights. Although various other Manichaean descriptions of the soul's journey refer to these stages, none is as exhaustive as this short text.[39] Despite an alternative interpretation by Julia Iwersen, which conceptualizes the Ascension Psalms as an instruction manual for an ecstatic ritual of ascent that was performed to initiate new members of the elect during the Bema festival, there is little reason to doubt the commemorative context of the hymn.[40] Its most likely context is within the commemoration rituals described in the *Kephalaia* (1 Keph. 115), during which catechumens and elect could support the soul of the departed in its journey upwards. The presence of the *Seven stages hymn* among the Kellis papyri solidifies evidence for the existence of Manichaean rituals of commemoration within this network of Egyptian Manichaean families.

39 Richter, *Aufstiegspsalmen*, 43 Tabelle 1.

40 J. Iwersen, "A Manichaean Ritual of Ascent? A Discussion of T. Kell.Copt. 2 A5 in the Light of Other Coptic Gnostic Materials," in *Zur lichten Heimat: Studien zu Manichäismus, Iranistik und Zentralasienkunde im Gedenken an Werner Sundermann*, ed. Team Turfanforschung (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2017), 232. A similar argument was presented by Widengren, more than fifty years ago, in which he reconstructed a baptismal ritual at the deathbed, connecting it with other gnostic "bride-chamber" rituals. G. Widengren, *Mesopotamian Elements in Manichaeism: (King and Saviour II): Studies in Manichaean, Mandaean, and Syrian-Gnostic Religion* (Uppsala: Lundequist, 1946), 104–22; Puech, "Liturgie et pratiques rituelles," 359ff. Among the many possible parallels, one could think of the Valentinian rituals. N. Denzey Lewis, "Apolytrosis as Ritual and Sacrament: Determining a Ritual Context for Death in Second-Century Marcosian Valentinianism," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 17, no. 4 (2009): 525–61; E. Evans, "Ritual in the Second Book of Jeu," in *Practicing Gnosis: Ritual, Magic, Theurgy and Liturgy in Nag Hammadi, Manichaean and Other Ancient Literature*, ed. A.D. DeConick, G. Shaw, and J.D. Turner (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 156; D. Burns, *Apocalypse of the Alien God. Platonism and the Exile of Sethian Gnosticism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 134–8. Iwersen argues that the *Seven stages hymn* lacks hymn-like features like a doxology and prayers of intercession, and therefore does not resemble the psalms at all. While this difference in genre asks for further study, it does not account for the overlapping stages studied by Richter. In fact, the publication of Kephalaia chapter 176 showcases two fivefold stages (or "transitions"), attesting to the development of a more systematized schema of what happened after death. See the translation in Pettipiece, *Pentadic Redaction*, 212–17.

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Deathbed Rituals

Another set of psalms provides evidence for a second ritualized moment at the deathbed. Frequently, the Ascension Psalms emphasize the "hour of need" (ⲧⲟⲩⲛⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲛⲁⲅⲕⲏ), dramatizing the moment of departure.[41] They vividly articulate the agony of dying in the first person singular: "I cry unto thee in the hour of the going forth from the body."[42] In contrast to the Psalms of Herakleides, associated with commemoration rituals, these Ascension Psalms relate only to the first stage of the journey after death, in which the soul meets its heavenly twin with the help of the angels.[43] They pay extensive attention to almsgiving and descriptions of morally correct behavior, clearly indicating that the Ascension Psalms were performed by catechumens.[44] At Kellis, two fragments of the Ascension Psalms have been found in House 3. Psalm 261 (T.Kellis II Copt. 6, side a) addresses Christ with a request for salvation: "Save me, O blessed Christ, the savior of the holy souls, I will pass up into the heavens and leave this body upon the earth."[45] Hereafter, the soul continues to describe his or her correct behavior on earth and his or her knowledge of the ways and wisdom of the holy ones, which will lead the singer(s) up into the world of the Luminaries. Likewise, Psalm 246 (P.Kellis II Copt. 1, side a) addresses Jesus as a kinsman and the Light guiding the soul on its journey through the Darkness. After enduring the challenges of the journey, the soul arrives and is allowed to enter into the kingdom and receive his or her glorious crown (P.Kellis II Copt. 1.8–14). As these two psalms were found in the same house as Matthaios's letter, they connect his concern about proper ritual action for his "great mother" to songs from the broader Manichaean tradition.[46]

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41 2 PsB. 55.24; 57.25, 61.23 and 65.29.

42 ϯⲱϣ ⲟⲩⲃⲏⲕ ϩⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲩⲛⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲧϭⲓⲛⲉⲓ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲙⲡⲥⲱⲙⲁ 2 PbB. 66.19–20. Richter considers expressions of great need and actuality combined with the "Ich-stil" to designate the hour of death, even though a similar style in the first person singular is employed when the entire community prays in the name of the departed. Richter, *Aufstiegspsalmen*, 120 and 05ff; Richter, "Die manichäische Toten- oder Seelenmesse," 538–9 indicating the difference between two groups of psalms.

43 Richter, *Aufstiegspsalmen*, 106; Richter, "Die manichäische Toten- oder Seelenmesse," 538. Note that Richter only includes the 3Her. Psalms in the death-ritual, not the 4Her. Psalms in another section of the *Psalmbook*.

44 Richter, *Aufstiegspsalmen*, 106; Cf. Boyce, *The Manichaean Hymn-Cycles in Parthian*, 12.

45 ⲥⲱⲧⲉ] ⲙ̄ⲙⲁï ⲡⲭ︦ⲣ︦ⲥ︦ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲟⲥ ⲡⲣⲉϥⲥⲱⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲙ̄ϯⲩⲭ[ⲁⲩ]ⲉ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ ϯⲛⲁⲡⲱⲛⲉ ⲁϩⲣⲏï ⲁⲙⲡⲏⲩⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲕⲱ ⲁϫⲛ̄ ⲡⲕⲁϩ ⲙ̄ⲡⲓⲥⲱⲙⲁ 2 PsB. 261, 75.11–12. The Kellis texts, unfortunately, only starts with fragments of the following lines and does not contain a version of this passage. See the short analysis in Richter, "Die manichäische Toten- oder Seelenmesse," 438.

46 Similar practices in eastern Manichaean sources. Richter, *Aufstiegspsalmen*, 57–59; Boyce, *The Manichaean Hymn-Cycles in Parthian*, 1–6; C. Colpe, "Die 'Himmelreise der Seele': Ausserhalb und Innerhalb der Gnosis," in *Le origini dello gnosticismo*, ed. U. Bianchi (Leiden: Brill, 1967), 81–98.

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The Kellis texts help to flesh out the content and setting of the various Manichaean death rituals, as the wooden board containing the *Seven stages hymn* also includes abbreviated versions of five or six psalms (see Table 15). Some texts in this compilation (specifically, texts A2 and A4) relate to the ritual setting at the deathbed. Text A4 contains the first line of each verse, but not the full text, though it does include speeches directed toward the soul that mention victory, a crown, and a diadem of the Light. Text A2 corresponds to one of the unpublished psalms from the first part of the *Psalmbook*, which addresses Christ "the savior of souls" (ⲡ[ⲣⲉϥⲥ]ⲱⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲙⲯⲩ[ⲭⲁ]ⲩⲉ). The legible content of these abbreviated psalms either relate to the fate of the soul or directly address the soul. The thematic coherence of the texts on this wooden board indicates that it was used in a liturgical setting at the side of deathbeds.

Unfortunately, none of the letter writers inform us in more detail about when and how deathbed rituals were performed. The presence of the various psalms, however, testify to the importance of commemoration and death rituals at Kellis. During such marked moments in life, inhabitants of Kellis saw themselves primarily as Manichaean catechumens. They "offered a hymn and a prayer to the light giver of the heights" and believed their almsgiving,

TABLE 15 Texts and content of the wooden board T.Kellis II Copt. 2

Text on T.Kellis II Copt. 2	**Content**
A1	Abbreviated Psalm (to Jesus)
A2	Abbreviated Psalm (to Christ). Parallel with Psalm 68 from 1 PsB.[a]
A3	Abbreviated Psalm (to the Soul?)
A4	Abbreviated Psalm (to the Soul?). Could be a parallel with Psalm 57 from 1 PsB.[b]
B1	Scribbles under the two columns with psalms. Doxologies? Mostly scrubbed away.
Backside	
A5	Seven Stages Hymn (single column)
B2	Abbreviated Psalm
C1	Illegible scribbles on the side (laterally).

a See edition and comparison in Gardner, *KLT1*, 18–24.
b Gardner, *KLT1*, 17.

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knowledge, and hymns earned them absolution.[47] In this sense, Matthaios was not alone in his concern for the ritual actions performed for the deceased. His family and neighbors must have sung the Manichaean psalms, prayed the prayers, and perhaps even financially contributed to the production of liturgical texts for death and commemoration rituals.

Christian and Manichaean Funerary Meals

Apart from songs, the death and commemoration rituals in the *Kephalaia* included alms gifts and a meal performed "in remembrance" of the departed. While it stands to reason that the Manichaeans ate together "in remembrance" of those who died, it remains invisible in the papyri. For Peter Brown, on the other hand, the Manichaean letters from Kellis are crucial evidence, arguing that pre-existing Christian rituals became "Manichaeized."[48] They inform us about the existence of funerary meals at a time when various Christian communities started to reject this practice. Unfortunately, Brown equates the *agape* in the Kellis sources with commemoration meals in the *Kephalaia*, and lumps together a variety of Manichaean terms with earlier Christian rituals, such as the *refrigerium* meals for the departed attested to in second-century graffiti on the walls of the *triclinium* of San Sebastiano in Rome.[49] Although I see strong similarities between early Christian funerary meals and the commemoration rituals in the *Kephalaia*, the Kellis papyri do not further substantiate this similarity.

A crucial difference between Christian and Manichaean eschatological teaching is found in the perception of individual eschatology. The Manichaean doctrine of the afterlife was less concerned with the survival of the individual's soul than the liberation of the Living Soul. Mary Boyce discerns two divergent attitudes toward the fate of the soul in Middle Persian and Parthian Manichaean texts, in which souls are either "ethical entities, conscious of the existence they have just left and of their moral achievements within it" or "passive members of

47 ⲁϥϯ ⲟⲩϩⲩⲙⲛⲟⲥ ⲙⲛ ⲟⲩϣⲗⲏⲗ [ⲙⲡⲫ]ⲱⲥⲧⲏⲣ ⲙ̄ⲡϫⲓⲥⲉ 1 Keph. 91, 233.27–28.

48 P. Brown, "Alms and the Afterlife: A Manichaean View of an Early Christian Practice," in *East & West: Papers in Ancient History Presented to Glen W. Bowersock*, ed. T.C. Brennan and H.I. Flower (London: Harvard University Press, 2008), 151.

49 P. Brown, *The Ransom of the Soul* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 38.

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the exiled light."[50] Coptic Manichaean texts reveal the same tension between individual eschatology and impersonal, collective eschatology. Matthaios's grief and the painstaking question about the efficacy of prayer for the dead in 1 Keph. 115 show hope for individuals, but Manichaean doctrinal texts mainly treat eschatology as an impersonal, cosmological event. They do not consider individual souls to be awaiting better times in a happy place, nor do they elaborate on the possibility that the dead would intervene on behalf of the living.[51] When the fate of the soul is discussed, the focus is on the cosmological liberation of the Living Soul, to such an extent that one scholar claims that "there is no individual salvation in Manichaeism."[52] However, the omnipresence of cosmological eschatology in Manichaean texts does not mean that more personal and individual eschatology is entirely absent. In fact, individuality is stressed in the Coptic Ascension Psalms. Despite traveling upwards to merge with the collective Light, the soul is still considered to be connected to individual virtues and misbehavior. Likewise, the two *Kephalaia* chapters discussed above give answers to questions about individual eschatology. They convey a pastoral message for those who lost a relative, elaborating on the expected individual judgment, during which Jesus will separate the sheep from the goats (Hom. 35, cf. 2 PsB. 154.8–12). Somehow, individual responsibility is retained until this moment of eschatological judgment.[53]

The Manichaean "geography of the other world" was primarily – but not exclusively – focused on the collective liberation of the Living Soul.[54] This

50 Boyce, *The Manichaean Hymn-Cycles in Parthian*, 12. Cf. Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 20. On individual and collective eschatology, see W. Sundermann, "Eschatology II: Manichean Eschatology," *Encyclopædia Iranica Online*, last updated: January 19, 2012, http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/eschatology-ii (accessed May 2021); Ries, *L'église gnostique de mani*, 219–33, 235–43; J.D. BeDuhn, "The Metabolism of Salvation: Manichaean Concepts of Human Physiology," in *The Light and the Darkness: Studies in Manichaeism and Its World*, ed. P.A. Mirecki and J.D. BeDuhn (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 32–33.

51 *Contra* Brown, *The Ransom of the Soul*, 36–40. On Augustine's own struggle with this element of Manichaean thought after the death of a close friend, see BeDuhn, *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma 1*, 91–95.

52 BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 233.

53 Heuser, "The Manichaean Myth According to Coptic Sources," 84–5; M. Hutter, "Mt 25:31–46 in der Deutung Manis," *Novum Testamentum* 33, no. 3 (1991): 276–82; Rose, *Die manichäische Christologie*, 132–153 discerns between Jesus role as judge in the collective eschatology and his more personal role as "Seelenführer". The ambiguity about the afterlife of the individual soul and the collective Living Soul is visible in the *Sermon on the Great War*'s description of the end of time, in which the peaceable kingdom is placed on earth. Pedersen, *Studies*, 396–7.

54 Brown, *The Ransom of the Soul*, 55 for "geography of the other world." It has recently has been argued, on the basis of a 13th-century Chinese painting, that salvation for

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stands in strong contrast to the Christian traditions found in the *triclinium* of San Sebastiano, where the graffiti expresses hope for a peaceful afterlife and the idea that the dead could hear the intercessions of the living and help them out. Brown's comparison is therefore limited at best. The Manichaean dead could benefit from earthly rituals (including meals), but they never returned the favor.[55]

The second problem in Peter Brown's assessment of the Kellis document is his equation of the *agape* with the "making of memory" and almsgiving (*prosphora*) as "the Manichaean equivalent of the Eucharist."[56] In his opinion, the Manichaean documents from Kellis "show how important these rituals were in the day-to-day life of Manichaeans," as their letters were "scattered with references to the *agape* offered for the souls of the dead."[57] As we have seen, the *agape* indeed features in both the KAB and the personal letters, but Brown's interpretation of this term cannot be correct in the Kellis context. *Agape* is used only once in the Coptic Manichaean texts for a commemoration meal (1 Keph. 115, 279.15), and nothing in the Kellis texts relates the *agape* to burials or commemorations. The phrase is entirely absent from the letters referring to the death and burial of Joubei. All references to *agape* in the Kellis papyri concern living people. For instance, someone requests it as a personal gift: "[T]he lentils and lupin seeds: make them as an *agape* for me."[58] The term "remembrance"

catechumens was possible, since the paintings "also gradually seem to become very personal statements for the hope of individual redemption of historical elect and lay figures depicted for example on banners after death." J. Ebert, "Individualisation of Redemption in a Manichaean Painting from Ningbo," in *Mani in Dublin*, ed. S.G. Richter, C. Horton, and K. Ohlhafer (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 155.

55 The Manichaean doctrine of transmigration made it improbable that any communication could take place after the soul had left the body. BeDuhn, "The Nature of the Manichaean Soul," 47.

56 Brown, *The Ransom of the Soul*, 49–51. The term *prosphora* is used for both gifts at the deathbed as gifts during the celebration of the Eucharist in this period. The former meaning is attested in P.Oxy. LXVII 4620.3960 "for the holy mass (?) for our (?) grandmother, 416 artabas," discussed in T. Hickey, *Wine, Wealth, and the State in Late Antique Egypt: The House of Apion at Oxyrhynchus* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012), 101–2; E. Wipszycka, *Les ressources et les activités économiques des églises en Égypte du IVe au VIIIe siècle* (Bruxelles: Fondation Egyptologique Reine Elisabeth, 1972), 69–77. Various other instances of *prosphora* for religious institutions include P.Oxy. XVI 1898 (receipt for received corn, 587 CE), 1901 (a testament including *prosphora* to a church), 1906 (donations for churches in (?) Alexandria). These *prosphora* donations *mortis causa*, however, are relatively late (mostly sixth century). Wipszycka, *The Alexandrian Church*, 111–2, 202; J.P. Thomas, *Private Religious Foundations in the Byzantine Empire* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1987), 77–80.

57 Brown, *The Ransom of the Soul*, 52; Brown, "Alms and the Afterlife," 153.

58 ⲛⲁⲣϣⲓ̣ⲛ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛⲧⲁⲣⲙⲟⲩⲥ ⲁⲣⲓⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲁⲕⲁⲡⲏ ϩⲁⲣⲁⲉⲓ P.Kellis V Copt. 47.10–11.

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also surfaces in the Kellis papyri, but again, not in the context of death. Rather than connecting this phrase with commemorative ritual meals, it is used for the world of the living: "I write, giving you the remembrance that you … for the matter is fine, until I come up."[59]

In short, although Brown is correct to highlight the commonality between various types of alms offerings for the dead, who Manichaeans deemed "very great and honored among people," this type of *agape* gifts was not omnipresent in the Kellis documents.[60] The letter pertaining to Matthaios's grief, the short references to Joubei's death, the stylized Coptic hymn for the soul's ascension, and the various psalms are all fragmentary remains of the Manichaean ritualized response to death in the village.

Burial Practices and Material Culture

How then did Manichaeans bury their dead? Since they believed the soul had to escape from the material world of the body, it seems implausible that they would have invested in expensive burials and a full traditional treatment of the body. At the same time, this doctrinal position did not result in a negative stance toward the physical body, as evident in the fact that health is viewed positively in the Kellis letters.[61] There is, however, no evidence pertaining to their treatment of corpses.[62] Some Chinese texts state that Manichaeans

59 ⲧⲥϩⲉї ⲉⲓⲧ̣ ⲛ̣ⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲣ̄ⲡⲙⲉⲩⲉ ϫⲉ ⲉⲣⲉ … ϩ̣ⲁ̣ϫⲉ ⲁⲙⲁⲩ̣ ϫⲉ ⲡϩⲱⲃ ⲕⲁⲗⲱⲥ ϣⲁϯⲉⲓ ⲁϩⲣⲏї P.Kellis V Copt. 32.24–28. In the later Coptic tradition, people would read the name(s) from tombstones, "in remembrance," during communal commemoration rituals. As in the Manichaean tradition, these rituals were considered to positively affect future salvation. J. van der Vliet, "'What Is Man?': The Nubian Tradition of Coptic Funerary Inscriptions," in *Nubian Voices: Studies in Christian Nubian Culture*, ed. A. Lajtar and J. van der Vliet (Warsaw: Raphael Taubenschlag Foundation, 2011), 195. It is, however, clear that this is not the context for these two letters of the elect.

60 [ⲉ]ⲡⲉⲓⲇⲏ ⲟⲩⲛⲁϭ ⲧⲟⲛⲱ ⲡⲉ ϥⲧⲁїⲁїⲧ ⲛⲁϩⲣ̄ⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ⲣ[ⲱⲙ]ⲉ 1 Keph. 115, 271.12.

61 Manichaeans considered the body empty after the soul had left it (1 Keph 53, 130.24–29). N.J. Baker-Brian, "'Putrid Boils and Sores, and Burning Wounds in the Body': The Valorisation of Health and Illness in Late Antique Manichaeism," *Harvard Theological Review* 109, no. 3 (2016): 422–46.

62 1 Keph. 53, 130.24–29. See also 1 Keph. 33 when the soul and its limbs leave the body, limb by limb. Richter, *Aufstiegspsalmen*, 48. Ries seems to believe that the body was considered a worthless piece of Darkness, after all the Light ascended, to be left alone without any treatment. Ries, *L'église gnostique de Mani*, 226. This may have been implied in Ibn al-Nadīm's description of Manichaean customs, but it is not made explicit. "That discarded body remains behind, and the sun, the moon, and the luminous deities strain

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ritually undressed their dead and buried them naked within a cloth sack, a practice that has been interpreted in light of the Manichaean rejection of the body. In absence of more profound discussions of Manichaean burial practices, the only available option is to look for patterns in the material record.[63] The two distinct Kellis cemeteries and the extensive funerary evidence elsewhere in the village offer an outstanding opportunity to examine religious diversity within the village, especially because the state-of-the-art (bio)archaeological research of the Dakhleh Oasis Project allows for a thorough examination of the treatment of the deceased bodies, showing that the average life expectancy in the oasis was not high.[64]

out from it those species which are water, fire, and air. (The product of this filtration) ascends to the sun and becomes divine. The rest of the body, which is all Darkness, is cast down to Jahannam." *Fihrist*, cited from Reeves, *Prolegomena to a History of Islamicate Manichaeism*, 217; Discussed in G. Flügel, *Mani, seine Lehre und seine Schriften: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Manichäismus* (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1862), 339–47.

63 A full examination of Manichaean death-rituals and burial is much needed. From the Roman Empire, one of the Theodosian laws (C.Th. 16.5.7.3, 381 CE) forbade Manichaeans to establish their "sepulchres of their funeral mysteries" in towns and cities or to disguise themselves under the name of other sects (*ne.. consueta feralium mysterioruum sepulcra constituant*). This is taken by Huebner as indication that religious groups used grave inscriptions as billboards to promote their virtues. S.R. Huebner, *Der Klerus in der Gesellschaft des spätantiken Kleinasiens* (Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag, 2005), 202. Instead, I think the law employs heresiological repertoire, using "feralis" metaphorically as deadly and "sepulcra" for heresy. G. Bartelink, "Repression von Häretikern und anderen religiösen Gruppierungen im späteren Altertum, in der Sprache wiederspiegelt," in *Violence in Ancient Christianity: Victims and Perpetrators*, ed. A.C. Geljon and R. Roukema (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 192. The famous Bassa-inscription published by Cumont has always been regarded as a funerary inscription, primarily because of its find location. M. Scopello, *Femme, Gnose et Manichéisme* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 293–315. On the eastern side of the tradition, we learn from the notes of a Confucian official that Manichaeans ritually undressed their dead and buried them naked within a cloth sack. Whether this is an actual description of Manichaean funerary rituals, or rather presents a local Sogdian perspective on Zoroastrian rituals, is unclear. Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire*, 270–85.

64 Based on the bioarchaeological analysis of the Kellis 2 interments, Molto has suggested a life expectancy of 16.7 years at birth, while 34.4 percent of the children did not survive the first year. The life expectancy at 19 years old was between 16.9 (males) and 23.3 (females) years. Such figures are lower than established calculations based on the census returns of Roman Egypt, which point to a life expectancy at birth in the low twenties and female life expectancy at 10 between 34.5 and 37.5 years. Molto, "Bio-Archaeological Research of Kellis 2: An Overview," 243; W. Scheidel, "Age and Health," in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*, ed. C. Riggs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 305–16.

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Differentiating Funerary Traditions in Kellis

The two cemeteries outside of the village proper (Kellis 1 and Kellis 2) have yielded extensive archaeological and bioarchaeological insights into burial customs, mummification, local diet, diseases, and life expectancy.[65] The West Cemetery (Kellis 1) has been dated to the late Ptolemaic and early Roman period, based on ceramics.[66] This cemetery consisted of a large number of tombs cut into the clay and sandstone terrace; most had low ceilings and single chambers. These chambers had narrow entrances and followed the contours of the hill, without a particular common orientation.[67] Most of the graves were disturbed by grave robbers, even though they were closed off by wooden doors or large sandstone slabs, which could be opened or replaced when new bodies were added to the tomb chambers.[68] In this cemetery, the bodies were not placed in coffins, but were wrapped in shrouds and placed on funerary beds.[69] A few had cartonnage head and foot coverings, which was not unusual in the oasis.[70] One of the bodies was covered with a gilded cartonnage representing

65 A.C. Aufderheide et al., "Mummification Practices at Kellis Site in Egypt's Dakhleh Oasis," *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* 31 (2004): 63–77; A.C. Aufderheide et al., "Human Mummification Practices at Ismant el-Kharab," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 85 (1999): 197–210; T.L. Dupras and Schwarcz, "Strangers in a Strange Land: Stable Isotope Evidence for Human Migration in the Dakhleh Oasis, Egypt," *Journal of Archaeological Science* 28 (2001): 1199–208; T.L. Dupras and M.W. Tocheri, "Reconstructing Infant Weaning Histories at Roman Period Kellis, Egypt Using Stable Isotope Analysis of Dentition," *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 134 (2007): 63–74; T.L. Dupras et al., "Birth in Ancient Egypt: Timing, Trauma, and Triumph? Evidence from the Daklah Oasis," in *Egyptian Bioarchaeology: Humans, Animals and the Environment*, ed. S. Ikram, J. Kaiser and R. Walker (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2015): 41–53; M.W. Tocheri et al., "Roman Period Fetal Skeletons from the East Cemetery (Kellis 2) of Kellis, Egypt," *International Journal of Osteoarchaeology* 15 (2005): 326–41; S. Fairgrieve and J.E. Molto, "Cribra Orbitalia in Two Temporally Disjunct Population Samples from the Dakhleh Oasis, Egypt," *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 111, no. 3 (2000): 319–31; J.E. Molto, "Bio–Archaeological Research of Kellis 2: An Overview," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994–1995 to 1998–1999 Field Seasons*, ed. C.A. Hope and G.E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002), 239–55; J.E. Molto, "The Comparative Skeletal Biology and Paleoepidemiology of the People from Ein Tirghi and Kellis, Dakhleh, Egypt," in *Oasis Papers 1*, ed. C.A. Marlow and A.J. Mills (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2001), 81–100.

66 M. Birrell, "Excavations in the Cemeteries of Ismant el-Kharab," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1992–1993 and 1993–1994 Field Seasons*, ed. C.A. Hope and A.J. Mills (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999), 29. Although more recent insights assign the cemetery to the first to third century CE. Hope, "The Kellis 1 Cemetery," 331.

67 Birrell, "Excavations in the Cemeteries of Ismant el-Kharab," 31.

68 Hope, "The Kellis 1 Cemetery," 326–7.

69 There are some traces of funerary beds. Hope, "The Kellis 1 Cemetery," 330.

70 A. Schweitzer, "Les parures de cartonnage des momies d'une nécropole d'Ismant el-Kharab," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994–1995 to 1998–1999 Field Seasons*, ed. C.A. Hope and G.E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002), 269–76.

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the god Tutu, and other grave goods included small wooden sculptures depicting the *ba*, the soul of the deceased. These *ba*-birds were equipped with human heads and outspread wings, which, according to Olaf Kaper, "represent an archaizing feature in the tomb equipment of the oases that had virtually disappeared elsewhere."[71] Libation tables reused in some of the fourth-century buildings probably came from these tombs and were used in the context of ritual commemoration.[72]

The East Cemetery (Kellis 2) was located on the other side of the wadi and encompassed about three to four thousand interments. In contrast to the West Cemetery, most graves only contained single interments with an east–west orientation.[73] Few burial objects such as jewelry or amulets were found. Instead, most graves only contained pottery shards, as large pieces were placed over the faces of the deceased.[74] This simple arrangement is commonly taken as a marker of Christianity, and the east-west orientation of the body is often interpreted as reflecting the belief that the dead will rise to face the returning Christ in the east.[75] Another difference from the West Cemetery that is seen as a Christian practice is the prevalence of infant burials. The East cemetery includes many fetuses buried in shallow pits among adult graves, a practice that is paralleled in the cemetery of the Bagawat, Kharga Oasis, where it is combined with Christian names and symbols.[76] The treatment of the bodies in the East Cemetery was also different, as few bodies showed traces of elaborate postmortem treatment. Instead, the bodies were wrapped in shrouds with salt, leaves, berries, and flowers combined between the wrappings. This funerary pattern is uniform, resembling changing funerary practices in other Oasis

71 Kaper, "The Western Oases," 728.
72 Hope, "The Kellis 1 Cemetery," 328.
73 Birrell, "Excavations in the Cemeteries of Ismant el-Kharab," 38.
74 J.E. Molto, "Bio–Archaeological Research of Kellis 2," 41. Interestingly, at the Christian necropolis of el-Deir (Kharga) the East-West orientation is not the only orientation, as a second group of graves had a N/W-S/E orientation. M. Coudert, "The Christian Necropolis of El-Deir in the North of Kharga Oasis," in *Oasis Papers 6*, ed. R.S. Bagnall, P. Davoli, and C.A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2013), 451–58.
75 Bowen, "Child, Infant and Foetal Burials," 369. She builds on the typology of D. Watts, *Christians and Pagans in Roman Britain* (London: Routledge, 1991), 57.
76 Tocheri et al., "Roman Period Fetal Skeletons from the East Cemetery (Kellis 2) of Kellis, Egypt," 326–41; Bowen, "Some Observations," 178; G.E. Bowen, "Child, Infant and Foetal Burials of the Late Roman Period at Ismant el-Kharab Ancient Kellis, Dakhleh Oasis," in *L'enfant et la mort dans l'antiquite II*, ed. M.D. Nenna (Alexandria: Centre d'Études Alexandrines, 2012), 351–72.

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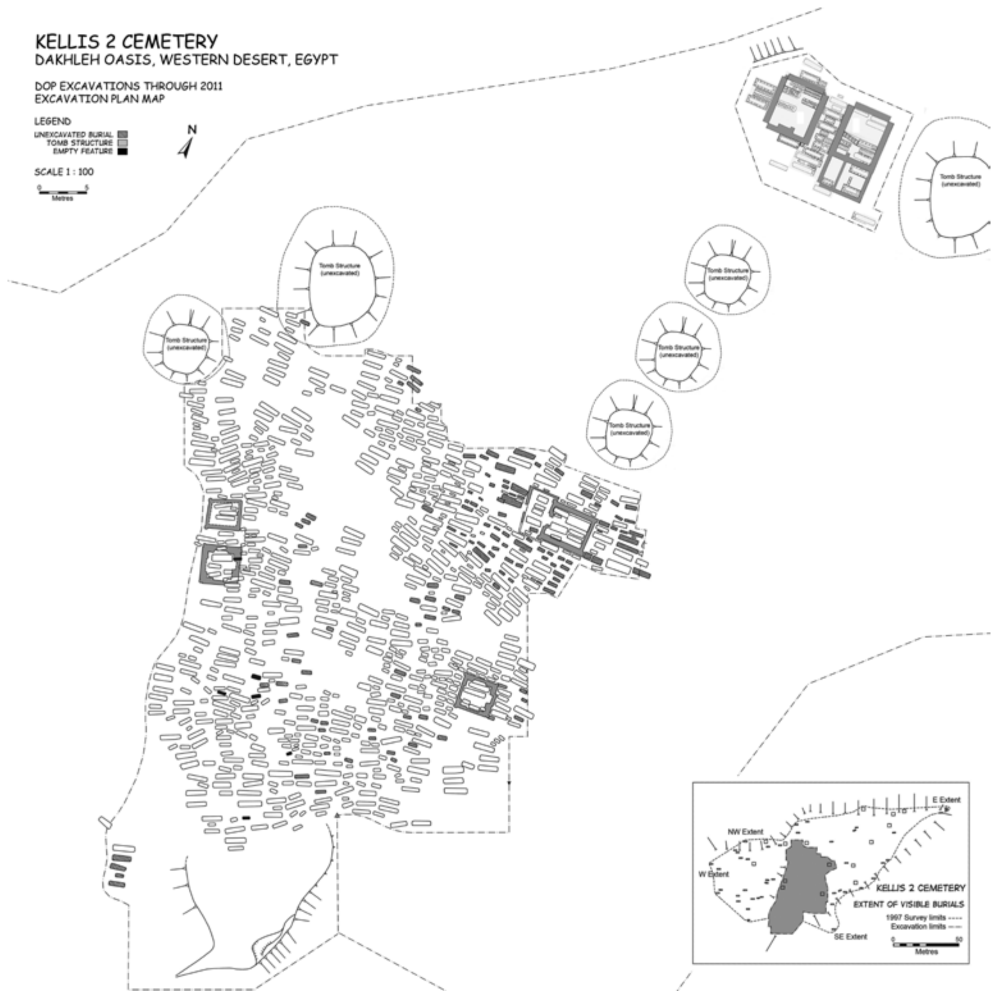

FIGURE 12 Plan of the East Cemetery
COURTESY OF THE DAKHLEH OASIS PROJECT

cemeteries, including the dovecot cemetery at Dush and the pit graves area at Bagawat.[77]

The difference between the two cemeteries seems to imply two diverging religious traditions: traditional Egyptian practices in the West Cemetery and

77 Bowen, "Some Observations," 172. On the transition process at other Oases's cemeteries, see F. Dunand and F. Letellier-Willemin. "Funerary Practices in the Great Oasis During Antiquity," in *The Great Oasis of Egypt*, ed. R.S. Bagnall and G. Tallet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 237–68. They note that some of the interments at el-Deir include symbols of the cross, and two mummies make a gesture of blessing with their right hand.

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Christian funerary practice in the East Cemetery.[78] The neat division between a Christian cemetery and a "pagan" cemetery as early as the fourth century is, however, unlikely.[79] The only instance of an explicit Christian symbol in the Kellis cemeteries is the gypsum sealing with a *crux ansata* in North Tomb 1.[80] Originally, this tomb contained decorations of traditional Egyptian gods, and the organization of the bodies suggests that the tomb was regularly opened to include recently deceased family members.[81] The last interments included in the tomb are different. These bodies were aligned with an east–west orientation; they lacked grave goods, and were only wrapped in linen. The *crux ansata* strongly suggests that the family believed in the efficacy of Christian symbols. But were all east-west interments with few traditional grave gifts and limited treatment of the body really *Christian burials*?

A fundamental argument *against* making a neat division between Christian burial practices (in the East Cemetery) and traditional Egyptian burials (in the West Cemetery) is intertwined with the difficulty of dating the time span of these two cemeteries. The West Cemetery has been dated roughly between the first and third century CE, although there is some evidence for the Ptolemaic period as well.[82] The radiocarbon dating of twenty-one burials from the East Cemetery has resulted in a more complex picture. The calibrated period ranges from the start of the first century to 600 CE, with a 98.8 percent probability of falling within the range of 48–436 CE.[83] These dates are at odds with the archaeological dating based on pottery and nomenclature, which suggests a

78 Bowen, "Some Observations," 169; Bowen, "Christianity in Dakhleh Oasis," 375–378. I have argued against this position in M. Brand, "Identifying Christian Burials," in *Perspectives on Lived Religion: Practices Transmission Landscape*, ed. N. Staring, H. Twiston Davies and L. Weiss (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2019), 85–95. Cf. A. Pleşa, "Religious Belief in Burial: Funerary Dress and Practice at the Late Antique and Early Islamic Cemeteries at Matmar and Mostagedda, Egypt (Late Fourth–Early Ninth Century CE)," *Ars Orientalis* 47 (2017): 18–42.

79 While Françoise Dunand initially left space for the creative agency of families and individuals, her more recent reflections on the changing funerary landscape in the Oases emphasizes Christianity as a fundamental force. F. Dunand, "Between Tradition and Innovation: Egyptian Funerary Practices in Late Antiquity," in *Egypt in the Byzantine World, 300–700*, ed. R.S. Bagnall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 163–84; F. Dunand, "Changes in Funerary Structures at Kharga from 'Traditional' to 'Christian' Tombs," in *The Oasis Papers 9*, ed. G.E. Bowen and C.A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2019), 381–93.

80 Bowen, "Early Christian Burial Practices," 81.

81 O.E. Kaper, "The Decoration of North Tomb 1," in *Oasis Papers 3*, ed. G.E. Bowen and C.A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003), 323–30.

82 Hope, "The Kellis 1 Cemetery," 331.

83 Stewart, Molto, and Reimer, "The Chronology of Kellis 2," 377. I thank E. Molto for discussing these findings with me and for showing me part of his unpublished work on this topic. In particular, I draw on the paper presented by E. Molto, P. Reimer, J.D. Stewart

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much shorter time range, from the end of the third to the end of the fourth century. The bioarchaeologists conclude that the "mortuary pattern at K2 predates the Christian period."[84]

For Gillian Bowen, one of the site's excavators, Christian burials (i.e., those with an east–west orientation) cannot be expected before 220 CE. In her opinion, even the early third-century date is too early for the observed burial patterns.[85] As a result, she rejects the outcome of the radiocarbon dating and favors a date from the mid-third century to fourth century CE, supported by fourth-century ceramics from the East Cemetery.[86] Radiocarbon dating, moreover, came up with widely diverging dates for two child burials from the same grave (roughly 260 years apart), suggesting a failure in the procedure or a pollution of the samples.[87]

Despite this anomaly, and against Bowen's interpretation of the funerary patterns, we cannot simply disavow all the radiocarbon dates. The so-called Christian burial customs were already in use far before Christianity could have had an impact on the local burial customs, as eleven graves are datable with a 95.4 percent probability before the middle of the third century, and four of them even before its third decade. The West Cemetery and the East Cemetery were both in use during the third century. The transition to funerary customs that favored an east–west orientation of the body and little to no grave gifts was a gradual process not *solely* related to the rise of Christianity, but to a wider array of social factors.[88]

A gradual change to east–west oriented interments is also visible in other cemeteries in the oases, but, as in Kellis, this never fully corresponded to the rise of Christianity.[89] A simple one-to-one theological explanation of funerary patterns also fails when applied to the southern part of the West cemetery

and L. Williams, "The dating of the Kellis 2 Cemetery: An ongoing conundrum," Annual Canadian Association for Physical Anthropology (London Ontario, 2004).

84 Molto, "Bio-Archaeological Research of Kellis 2: An Overview," 239–55.

85 Bowen, "Some Observations," 168.

86 Bowen, "Some Observations," 168; Bowen, "Child, Infant and Foetal Burials," 368–9.

87 Bowen explains the radiocarbon date as affected by the plant-derived material in the resin coating applied to the body. Cited in Stewart, Molto, and Reimer, "The Chronology of Kellis 2," 377. On this coating, see J. Maurer, T. Möhring, and J. Rullkötter, "Plant Lipids and Fossil Hydrocarbons in Embalming Material of Roman Period Mummies from the Dakhleh Oasis, Western Desert, Egypt," *Journal of Archaeological Science* 29 (2002): 761.

88 As Frankfurter concludes, "we can say that – to whatever degree they arose in connection with other Christian practices – they would have served the transformation of the soul, the family's investment in that transformation, and perhaps some community investment in the distinction of mortuary practices." Frankfurter, *Christianizing Egypt*, 179.

89 Bowen, "Some Observations," 169.

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at el-Deir (Kharga Oasis), where east–west oriented interments were found in close proximity to those with a north–west or south–east orientation.[90] At Fag el-Gamous, a site that was previously thought to support the thesis of a strong Christian differentiation, radiocarbon dating has shown that various types of burial orientations coexisted for over two hundred years. The archaeological team now suggests that the change in orientation was not "instantaneous or wholesale," but that multiple conventions and traditions intermingled without "segregation based on the underlying cultural and religious beliefs associated with burial orientation."[91] Many scholars now believe that limited treatment of bodies correlated with a general transition in mummification practices, rather than with the rise of Christianity.[92] Furthermore, there is some fourth-century evidence for the burial of Christians and non-Christians in the same tomb,[93] and for the use of traditional amulets and other grave goods in westward facing tombs.[94] Altogether, this suggests that group-specific burial customs cannot have been the only driving force behind changes in funerary patterns. Without additional indications of Christian practice, the funerary pattern of the East Cemetery of Kellis cannot be tied solely or directly to the imposition of Christian behavioral norms and church regulations. Christians and Manichaeans, as well as their neighbors, must have continued to bury

90 The two sections of the cemetery may have dated to different periods. Coudert, "The Christian Necropolis of El-Deir," 454; Dunand, "Changes in Funerary Structures," 390 points to a Gallo-Roman cemetery at Frenouville (Calvados, France) with a similar distribution of various orientations.

91 P.R. Evans, D.M. Whitchurch, and K. Muhlestein, "Rethinking Burial Dates at a Graeco-Roman Cemetery: Fag el-Gamous, Fayoum, Egypt," *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports* 2 (2015): 213. Moreover, Raven has pointed to the longstanding cosmological orientations in Egyptian funerary and temple architecture. M.J. Raven, "Egyptian Concepts on the Orientation of the Human Body," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 91 (2005): 37–53; Cf. B. Gessler-Löhr, "Mummies and Mummification," in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*, ed. C. Riggs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 675, differences in treatment are "an indication of social stratification." Other examples are given in F. Dunand and R. Lichtenberg, *Mummies and Death in Egypt* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 129.

92 Gessler-Löhr, "Mummies and Mummification," 664–83; M.A. Stadler, "Funerary Religion: The Final Phase of an Egyptian Tradition," in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*, ed. C. Riggs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 383–97.

93 M.J. Johnson, "Pagan-Christian Burial Practices of the Fourth Century: Shared Tombs?," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 5, no. 1 (1997): 37–59.

94 J. Rowland, "The Ptolemaic-Roman Cemetery at the Quesna Archaeological Area," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 94 (2008): 88–89.

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their dead according to family-based customs, gradually adopting alternative practices that reflected the gradual changing funerary habits of the region.[95]

Funerary Churches

The fourth-century West Church, close to the Main Temple, has been posited as a place where Manichaeans gathered and commemorated their dead.[96] The inclusion of two graves within the church, and additional simple interments directly associated with the building (see Figure 13), indicate its function as a funerary church. The two monumental tombs on the platform east of the building date back to an earlier period.[97] Originating in the second century, these tombs were reused for burials in the third and fourth century, which is evident from east-west orientated interments with very limited postmortem treatment and few traditional funerary items (interestingly, except for golden rings with gems).[98] The two graves inside the church contained the body of a man and an infant of about six months old, buried there after the church was erected, as their bodies aligned with the bema platform. Similar graves along the walls of the church and inside its enclosure followed the same arrangements: they all held single interments laid in a simple pit, some covered with low-stepped mud-brick structures.[99] Nothing here indicates a Manichaean background.

The associated building south of the church may have been either a domestic residence, or a gathering place with a kitchen for funerary rituals.[100] The minor finds from these rooms – coins, ostraca, eggshells, and donkey hooves – do not

95 Rebillard's emphasis on family-based rituals is supported (although weakly) by the bioarchaeological evidence, showing the same rare disease in one of the bodies of North Tomb 1 and the enclosure cemetery. This may indicate (biological) kinship. J.E. Molto et al., "Late Roman Period Human Skeletal Remains from Area D/6 and D/7 and North Tomb 1 at Kellis," in *Oasis Papers 3*, ed. G.E. Bowen and C.A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003), 362; Molto, "Bio-Archaeological Research of Kellis 2," 250–53.

96 Bowen, "Fourth-Century Churches," 78.

97 Hope, "A Brief Report on the Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab in 1992–93," 21.

98 G.E. Bowen, "Early Christian Burial Practices at Kellis, Dakhleh Oasis, Egypt," *Artefact* 26, no. 1 (2003): 84; C.A. Hope and J. McKenzie, "Interim Report on the West Tombs," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1992–1993 and 1993–1994 Field Seasons*, ed. C.A. Hope and A.J. Mills (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999), 60–61.

99 One of the graves had a small bowl at the head end, containing pieces of charcoal. According to Bowen, this may have been a Eucharist offered at the graveside. Bowen, "Fourth-Century Churches," 78.

100 Bowen, "Christianity in Dakhleh Oasis," 371; Bowen, "Some Observations," 177. Two-room mud-brick structure in Hope, "The Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab from 2000 to 2002," 252.

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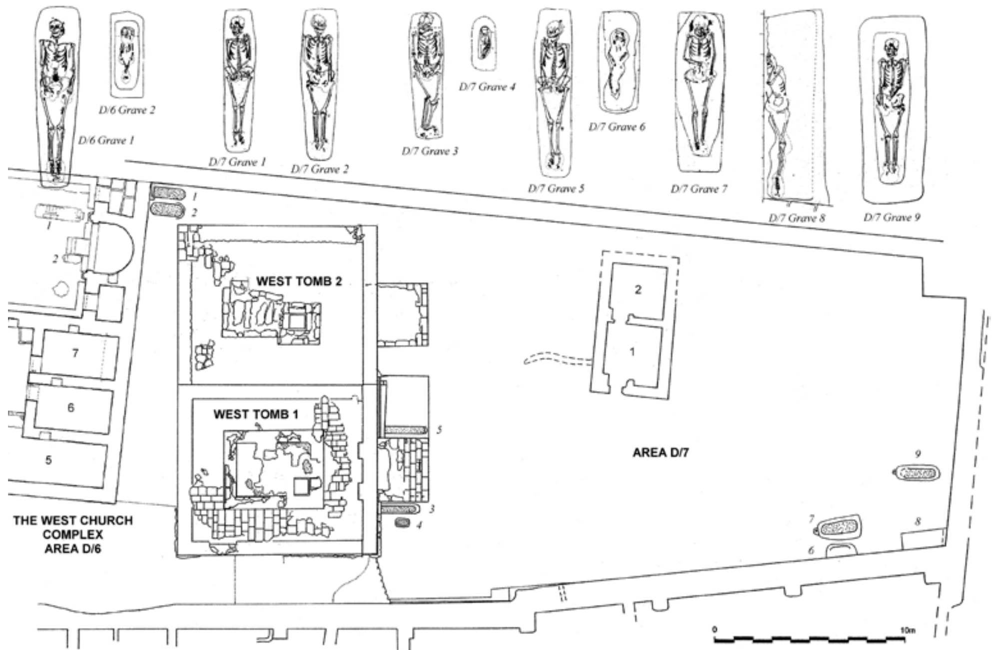

FIGURE 13 Plan of Enclosure 4 with the West Church and tombs (with enlarged representations of the graves)
COURTESY OF THE DAKHLEH OASIS PROJECT AND COLIN A. HOPE

contribute to further identification of the interments.[101] On the east side of the West Tombs, a small, two-room structure was erected, either as a superstructure above family graves, or as a gathering place for funerary rituals.[102] Decorated glass was found immediately east of this two-room structure, including a colorful jug with depictions of gladiators, dating from the second half of the fourth century. Regardless of whether this luxurious jug was lost, disposed of, or intentionally left near the graves, it highlights the presence and accessibility of wealth, Roman culture, and its associated social status.[103]

Other evidence for funerary churches in the oases abounds, pointing toward a regional religious pattern that had little to do with the Manichaean families

101 Bowen, "Some Observations," 177; Worp, *Greek Ostraka from Kellis*, no. 253–68.

102 Bowen, "Some Observations," 177 calls the option of a family tomb "unlikely." The fragmentary papyrus finds have not yet been edited, but Bowen assures me they contain economic accounts and do not shed light on the function of the church (Bowen, personal communication, May 2016).

103 C.A. Hope and H. Whitehouse, "The Gladiator Jug from Ismant el-Kharab," in *Oasis Papers 3*, ed. C.A. Hope and G.E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003), 290–310.

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of Kellis. Churches with identifiable funerary spaces have been found in Ain el-Gedida, Trimithis, and Deir Abu Matta. At Trimithis's church, five human interments were found without funerary goods and with all heads placed to the west. Archaeologists found similar interments inside and close to a church building at Deir Abu Matta,[104] but the church at Trimithis stands out because of its funerary crypt – the earliest datable crypt in Egypt.[105] It could only be entered through the sacristy of the church, which led to a subterranean room containing three tombs, bringing the total number of burials in the oasis's churches to eight. Bioarchaeological research has identified not only the grave of a six-month-old infant in Kellis, and a teenage girl found close to the *bema* in the Trimithis church, but also a male body with typical military injuries.[106] Rather than belonging to members of the clergy, or religious ascetics like Manichaean elect, the bodies belonged to lay individuals. It is, therefore, likely that local families paid for burials in the churches long before this became common practice in the west.[107]

Despite the abundance of material evidence, it is impossible to connect the material remains of Kellis's funerary traditions to the social and textual world of the Manichaeans in the oasis. Future studies will have to examine to what extent this invisibility is the result of the nature of burial remains, or whether it is indicative of a larger trend within the Manichaean tradition.

Conclusions

By exploring traces of burial practices and death rituals in psalms and documentary letters, we have gained an impression of the role that death and the journey of the soul played in the lives of ancient individuals in Kellis. Death, burial and even commemoration rituals can be gleaned from the papyri, but there are no traces of Manichaeanness in the material record of the cemeteries and tombs at Kellis. Presumably, the Manichaean families buried their

104 G.E. Bowen, "The Church of Deir Abu Metta and a Christian Cemetery in Dakhleh Oasis: A Brief Report," *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 19 (2008): 7–16.

105 Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 128–30 (Aravecchia).

106 N. Aravecchia et al., "The Church at Amheida (Ancient Trimithis) in the Dakhleh Oasis, Egypt. A Bioarchaeological Perspective on an Early Christian Mortuary Complex," *Bioarchaeology of the Near East* 9 (2015): 21–43.

107 Again, the family-based hypothesis finds support in the bioarchaeology, as three out of ten interments surrounding the church showed traces of a rare genetic trait, and three males in the area had *spina bifida occulta* (frequently considered influenced by genetic factors). Molto et al., "Late Roman Period Human Skeletal Remains," 362.

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dead with simple or no postmortem treatment in the pit graves of the East Cemetery, but direct evidence is absent. The archaeology and radiocarbon dating of the interments suggests that it is best to avoid "single-issue questions of identity."[108] Instead of following group-specific regulations regarding religious behavior, the individuals and families in Kellis conformed to locally available repertoires and expectations regarding death and burial that only gradually changed over time.

Undisputed evidence for Manichaean commemoration rituals has been found in Kellis. The psalms relate to the various stages of the soul's ascent through the heavens into the world of Light found in Manichaean eschatology. The fact that Matthaios explicitly related his grief for his great mother to the absence of the elect indicates the presence of a fully developed set of rituals, both during the last moments of life and after a longer period of mourning. The psalms and hymns found in Kellis contain enough information to establish a strong link with the Herakleides Psalms and the rituals elucidated in the two *Kephalaia* chapters on almsgiving "for those who have left the body," which indicates a Manichaean gathering marked with great emotional intensity. The songs and rituals stressed the connection between the Manichaean's earthly lives and the cosmological fate of the soul after death. As such, this event would have created a sense of groupness, fostering the imagination of a community that would exist beyond death among all those present: elect and catechumens.

108 L. Meskell, "Archaeologies of Identity," in *Archaeological Theory Today*, ed. I. Hodder (Malden: Polity, 2001), 187.

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CHAPTER 7

Ision's Books: Scribal Culture and Access to Manichaean Texts

> Study your psalms, whether Greek or Coptic, every day … Write a little from time to time, more and more. Write a daily example, for I need you to write books here
>
> MAKARIOS TO HIS SON[1]

•••

> Send a well-proportioned and nicely executed ten-page notebook for your brother Ision. For he has become a user of Greek and a Syriac reader
>
> APA LYSIMACHOS TO THEOGNOSTOS[2]

∴

The prominent role of books in Manichaeism positions Manichaeans at the heart of the "scriptural revolution" of late antique religion, in which text and religious books began to dominate the transmission of religious wisdom and daily ritual practice.[3] Manichaeans highlighted Mani's personal involvement in committing his teachings to writing when they represented themselves to others, even listing it as a major advantage over all previous religions.[4] They

1 ⲙⲉⲗⲉⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛ̣[ⲉⲕ]ⲯⲁⲗⲙⲟⲥ ⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲓⲁⲛⲓⲛ ⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲣⲙ̄ⲛ̄ⲕⲏⲙⲉ ϩⲟⲟⲩ <ⲛⲓⲙ>… ⲥ̣ϩ̣ ϩⲛ̄ⲕ[ⲟⲩⲓ ϩ]ⲛ̄ ϩⲛ̄ⲥⲁⲡ ⲥⲁⲡ ⲛ̄ϩⲟⲩⲟ ⲛ̄ϩⲟ[ⲩⲟ] ⲥ̣ϩ̄ ⲟⲩⲧⲩⲡⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲙⲏⲛⲉ ϫⲉ ϯⲣ̄ⲭⲣⲓ̣[ⲁ ⲙⲙ]ⲁⲕ ⲁⲥϩ̄ ϩⲛ̄ϫⲱⲙⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲓⲙⲁ P.Kellis V Copt. 19.13–14 and 17–18. See below on this passage and the translation.

2 Πινακίδιον εὔμετρον καὶ ἀστῖον δέκα πτυχῶν πέμψον τῷ ἀδελφῷ σου Ἰσίωνι. Ἑλληνιστὴς γὰρ γέγονεν καὶ ἀναγνώστης συρ̣ι̣ατ̣τικός P.Kellis I Gr. 67.17–21, translation in Gardner, "P. Kellis I 67 Revisited," 224.

3 Stroumsa, *The Scriptural Universe of Ancient Christianity*. J.C. Reeves, "Manichaeans as *Ahl Al-Kitab*: A Study in Manichaean Scripturalism," in *Light against Darkness: Dualism in Ancient Mediterranean Religion and the Contemporary World*, ed. A. Lange, et al. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 249–65.

4 Discussed below and in G.G. Stroumsa, "The Scriptural Movement of Late Antiquity and Christian Monasticism," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 16, no. 1 (2008): 61–77; G.G. Stroumsa, *The End of Sacrifice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 36–42.

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also stressed the role of scribes and books in their hagiographical accounts of the earliest missionary success in the Roman Empire:

> They [Adda and Pattek] went to the Roman Empire and saw many doctrinal disputes with the religions. Many Elect and Hearers were chosen. Patig was there for one year. Then he returned and appeared before the apostle. Hereafter the lord [Mani] sent three scribes, the Gospel and two other writings to Adda. He gave the order: 'Do not take it further, but stay there like a merchant who collects a treasure.'[5]

In a similar story from Manichaean hagiography, Mar Ammo, the apostle to the East, was only able to convince the frontier spirit Bagard to let him enter the kingdom after reciting from *The Treasure of Life*, as Mani had instructed him in a vision.[6] In both accounts, Mani's books were more than just vehicles of information; they represented and embodied the Apostle of Light's power. The Manichaean *Psalmbook* specified the nature of this power with a medical metaphor, presenting Mani's books as tools of the "great physician" (ⲡⲛⲁϭ ⲛⲥⲉïⲛⲉ):

> He has the antidote that is good for every affection. There are two and twenty compounds in his antidote: His *Great Gospel*, the good tidings of all them that are of the Light. His waterpot is the *Thesaurus*, the Treasure of Life. In it there is hot water: there is some cold water also mixed with it. His soft sponge that wipes away bruises is the *Pragmateia*. His knife for cutting is the *Book of Mysteries*. His excellent swabs are the *Book of Giants*. The medicine chest of every cure is the *Book of his Letters*.[7]

This high opinion of books has contributed to the characterization of Manichaeism as one of the foremost late antique *textual communities*, i.e., religious groups centered around the interpretation of a written text, frequently mediated through charismatic key figures.[8] But how central was the interpretation of written texts in everyday life?

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5 M2 translated in Asmussen, *Manichaean Literature*, 21. Reproduced in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 21a.

6 Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire*, 219–20; Baker-Brian, *Manichaeism*, 71–72.

7 ⲟⲩⲛ̄ⲧⲉϥ ⲧⲁⲛⲧⲓⲇⲟⲧⲟⲥ ⲉϣⲁⲥⲣ̄ϣⲉⲩ ⲁⲡⲁⲑⲟⲥ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲟⲩⲛ̄ ϫⲟⲩⲧⲥⲛⲁⲩⲥ ⲙ̄ⲙⲓⲅⲙⲁ ϣⲟⲟⲡ ϩⲛ̄ⲧⲉϥⲁⲛⲓⲇⲟⲧⲟⲥ ⲡⲉϥⲛⲁϭ ⲛ̄ⲉⲩⲁⲅⲅⲉⲗⲓⲟⲛ ⲡϣⲙ̄ⲛⲟⲩϥⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲡⲟⲩⲁïⲛⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲧⲉϥⲗⲁⲕⲁⲛⲏ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲩ ⲡⲉ ⲡⲑⲏⲥⲁⲩⲣⲟⲥ ⲡⲉϩⲟ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ ⲡⲱⲛϩ̄ ⲟⲩⲛ̄ ⲙⲟⲩ ϩⲙ̄ⲙⲉ ⲛ̄ϩⲏⲧⲥ̄. ⲙⲟⲩⲛⲕⲃ̄ⲃⲉ ⲁⲛ ⲟⲩⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲁⲛ ⲧⲏⲧ ⲛⲉⲙⲉⲥ ⲡⲉϥⲥⲡⲟⲅⲅⲟⲥ ⲉⲧϭⲁⲛ ⲉⲧⲃⲱⲧ ⲡⲗⲏⲅⲏ ⲧⲉ ⲧⲡⲣⲁⲅⲙⲁⲧⲓⲁ ⲡϥⲁ̣ⲕⲙⲁⲇⲓⲟⲛ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲱϫⲉ ⲡⲉ ⲡϫⲱⲙⲉ ⲛ̄ⲙ̄ⲙⲩⲥⲧⲏⲣⲓⲟⲛ ⲛⲉϥϣⲗ ⲉⲧⲛ̣ⲁⲛⲟ̣ⲟⲩ ⲡⲉ ⲡϫⲱⲙⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ϭⲁⲗⲁϣⲓⲣⲉ ⲡⲛⲁⲣⲑⲏⲝ ⲙ̄ⲡⲁϩⲣⲉ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲡⲉ ⲡϫⲱⲙⲉ ⲛ̣̄ⲛ̣ⲉ̣ϥⲉⲡⲓⲥⲧⲟⲗⲁⲩⲉ 2 PsB. 46.19–30. Wurst translated ⲡⲛⲁⲣⲑⲏⲝ "der Kasten."

8 B. Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1983), 88–92;

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The inhabitants of Houses 1–3 in Kellis also loved books. Some of them were even deeply involved with Manichaean books, such as Matthaios as a scribe-in-training and Ision as a Syriac *lector*. The personal letters mention book writing intentionally and in passing, pointing to scribal activity that can also be observed in the archaeological record. The archaeological finds included wooden tablets, school equipment and exercises, and even papyri with Syriac-Coptic wordlists. Writing was not done alone. The letters sketch the basic outlines of a scribal network that included Matthaios, Ision, and various other Kellites, who read and copied biblical, apocryphal, classical, and Manichaean texts. This chapter will examine the Kellis scribal network to determine the catechumens' and elect's role in the process of book writing. Did catechumens have access to the so-called canon of Manichaean books, or was this knowledge off-limits for all except the elect? Should the local scribal network and reading practices be understood in light of the textual community delineated in Manichaean hagiography?[9] Even though the reading and copying of Manichaean texts constituted one of the most outstanding moments of Manichaeanness, it took place side-by-side with the transmission of spells, biblical passages, and Christian texts, as well as ongoing engagement with classical literature.

Copying and Circulating Books

The circulation and production of books is one of the returning themes in the personal letters from Kellis. Most noteworthy is Makarios's instruction to Matthaios, who is trained as a scribe:

> Study your psalms, whether Greek or Coptic, every day (?) ... Do not abandon your vow. Here the *Judgement of Peter* is with you.[10] Do the *Apostolos*,

K. Hopkins, "Conquest by Book," in *Literacy in the Roman World*, ed. M. Beard, et al. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1991), 133–58. This central feature was discussed already at length before the watershed discoveries of the twentieth century. P. Alfaric, *Les écritures manichéennes* (Paris: Emile Nourry, 1918).

9 E. Iricinschi, "'A Thousand Books Will Be Saved': Manichaean Writings and Religious Propaganda in the Roman Empire," in *Jewish and Christian Scripture as Artifact and Canon*, ed. C.A. Evans and D. Zacharias (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2009), 269; E. Iricinschi, "*Tam pretiosi codices vestri*. Hebrew Scriptures and Persian Books in Augustine's Anti-Manichaean Writings," in *Revelation, Literature and Community in Late Antiquity*, ed. P. Townsend and M. Vidas (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 158.

10 Should we translate ⲉⲓⲥ … ϩⲁⲧⲏⲕ freely with "attached you'll find…," even though in line 84, Matthaios is to bring the *Judgment of Peter* (to Makarios)? Schenke, "Rezension zu Iain Gardner," 223.

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or else master the *Great Prayers* and the Greek *Psalms*. Here too the *Sayings* are with you, study them! Here are the *Prostrations*. Write a little from time to time, more and more. Write a daily example, for I need you to write books here.[11]

Makarios continues with detailed logistical instructions: "[I]f my mother Kouria will give the great (*Book of*) *Epistles*, bring it with you. If not, bring the small one, with the *Prayer-book* and the *Judgement of Peter*."[12] In a fragmentary section of P.Kellis V Copt. 24, Makarios reports to Maria that someone (it is tempting to interpret this as another reference to their son Matthaios) has not finished writing a book, stating, "If God will give grace, he will finish it."[13] Another letter, written by Pekos and perhaps addressed to Pamour III, contains similar instructions regarding the production and circulation of books: "(About) this book that Lamon has: let the *Acts* be copied (?) from it. (As for) the *Gospel*: Let them bring it to me from father Pabo."[14] Some of the requests are formulated with less patience. For example, the author of P.Kellis V Copt. 34 wants to know "the hour when your son has finished writing the book."[15] While some of the titles are difficult to identify, at least half of the texts mentioned in these letters are known from the Manichaean tradition (see Table 16).

Makarios's admonition to Matthaios to practice writing the "psalms, whether Greek or Coptic" is the first identifiable reference to Manichaean texts.[16] It either refers to the Greek and Coptic songs found among the liturgical texts from Kellis, or to a canonical Manichaean book called the "two psalms," attributed to Mani himself (2 PsB. 47.3). The adjective "great" in "the great prayers,"

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11 ⲙⲉⲗⲉⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛ̣[ⲉⲕ]ⲯⲁⲗⲙⲟⲥ ⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲓⲁⲛⲓⲛ ⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲣⲙ̄ⲛ̄ⲕⲏⲙⲉ ϩⲟⲟⲩ <ⲛⲓⲙ> ⲉⲣⲉ ⲧ̄ⲥⲣⲁϩ[…]ⲡ̣ ⲙⲡⲣ̄ⲕⲉ ⲧⲉⲕⲉⲡⲁⲅⲅⲉⲗⲓⲁ ⲉⲃⲁⲗ ⲉⲓⲥ ⲧ̄ⲕⲣⲓⲥⲓⲥ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲧⲣⲟⲥ ϩⲁⲧ̣ⲏⲕ ⲉ[ⲣⲓ ⲡⲁⲡ]ⲟⲥⲧⲟ̣ⲗⲟⲥ ⲏ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲛ ⲁⲙⲁϩⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲛⲁϭ ⲛ̄ϣⲗⲏⲗ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ⲯⲁ̣[ⲗ]ⲙⲟⲥ ⲛ̣[ⲟⲩⲓⲁⲛ]ⲓ̣ⲛ ⲉⲓⲥ ⲛ̄ⲣⲏⲙⲁ ⲁⲛ ϩⲁⲧⲏⲕ ⲁⲣⲓ ⲙ[ⲉ]ⲗⲉⲧⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲩ ⲉⲓⲥ ⲛ̄ⲕⲗⲓⲥⲓⲥ ⲥ̣ϩ̣ ϩⲛ̄ⲕ[ⲟⲩⲓ ϩ]ⲛ̄ ϩⲛ̄ⲥⲁⲡ ⲥⲁⲡ ⲛ̄ϩⲟⲩⲟ ⲛ̄ϩⲟ[ⲩⲟ] ⲥ̣ϩ̄ ⲟⲩⲧⲩⲡⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲙⲏⲛⲉ ϫⲉ ϯⲣ̄ⲭⲣⲓ̣[ⲁ ⲙⲙ]ⲁⲕ ⲁⲥϩ̄ ϩⲛ̄ϫⲱⲙⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲓⲙⲁ P.Kellis V Copt. 19.13–19.

12 ⲉϣⲱⲡⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲙⲟ ϭⲟⲩⲣⲓⲁ ⲛⲁϯ ⲡⲛⲁϭ ⲛⲉⲡⲓⲥⲧⲟⲗ[ⲓⲟⲛ] ⲉⲛⲓϥ ⲛⲙ̄ⲙⲉⲕ ⲉϣⲱⲡⲉ ⲉⲙ̄ⲙ̄ⲁⲛ ⲁⲛ̣ⲓ ⲡ̣ⲕⲟⲩⲓ̈ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲉⲩⲭⲱⲛ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲧⲕⲣⲓⲥⲓⲥ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲧⲣⲟⲥ P.Kellis V Copt. 19.82–84.

13 ⲉ̣ⲣϣ[ⲁⲛ]ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ϯ ⲡϩⲙⲁⲧ̀ ⲛϥ̄ϫⲁⲕϥ P.Kellis V Copt. 24.37–38 (modified translation).

14 ⲡⲓ̣ϫⲱⲙ ⲉⲧⲛⲧⲟⲧϥ̄ ⲛⲗⲁⲙⲱⲛ ⲧⲁⲣⲉ ⲛⲓⲡⲣⲁⲝⲉⲓⲥ ϩⲣⲓϥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁϥ ⲡⲉⲩⲁⲅ̀ⲅⲉⲗⲓⲟⲛ ⲧⲣⲟⲩⲛ̣̄ⲧϥ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲧϥ̣ ⲙ̄ⲡⲓⲱⲧ vac ⲡ̣ⲁⲃⲟ (modified translation) P.Kellis VII Copt. 120.2–7, Pekos to Pamour (III?). See the linguistic notes in Shisha-Halevy, "Review Article of: Gardner," 275.

15 […ⲧⲟ]ⲩⲛⲟⲩ ⲉⲧⲉⲣⲉ ⲡⲕϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲟⲩⲱ ⲉϥⲥϩⲉ̈ⲓ ⲙ̄ⲡϫϣ̣ⲙ̣ⲉ̣ P.Kellis V Copt. 34.22–23. In P.Kellis V Copt. 33, the letter writer asks whether "the little one completed the *gospel*" and mentions "read the *epaggeliai*." ⲁ ⲡⲕⲟⲩⲓ̈ ϫⲱⲕ [ⲡⲉⲩⲁ]ⲅ̀ⲅⲉⲗⲓⲟⲛ and ⲱϣ̣ ⲛⲉ̣ⲡⲁⲅ̀ⲅⲉⲗⲓⲁ· P.Kellis V Copt. 33.3–4 and 7–8.

16 ⲛ̄ⲛ[ⲉⲕ]ⲯⲁⲗⲙⲟⲥ ⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲓⲁⲛⲓⲛ ⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲣⲙ̄ⲛ̄ⲕⲏⲙⲉ, P.Kellis V Copt. 19.13–14. Further down, Makarios mentions the "Greek Psalms" ⲛ̄ⲯⲁ̣[ⲗ]ⲙⲟⲥ ⲛ̣[ⲟⲩⲓⲁⲛ]ⲓⲛ, P.Kellis V Copt. 19.16.

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strongly suggests that Mani's *Prayers* were meant (2 PsB. 47.4).[17] The presence of a wooden board in Kellis with the Greek version of the daily Manichaean prayers (known as the *Prayer of the Emanations*) adds weight to this interpretation. If these daily prayers indeed go back to the third-century, they may have been part of the canonical *Prayers* attributed to Mani.[18] A second Kellis letter mentioning a "prayer" associated with Pebo (ⲧⲉⲩⲭⲏ, P.Kellis VII Copt. 66.7–8) is not related, since it can also be rendered "the request of Pebo."[19] Makarios's letter continues with the "great *Epistles*," presumably Mani's *Epistles*, since remnants of codices with this text were found in Kellis.[20] Another Coptic letter may have referred to Mani's *Epistles* as "this letter" in the context of circulating and copying books.[21]

Two other items on Makarios's list did not refer to Manichaean texts. Rather than "prostrations" (ⲛ̄ⲕⲗⲓⲥⲓⲥ) equaling the daily prostrations, and "sayings" (ⲛ̄ⲣⲏⲙⲁ) meaning a collection of Manichaean homilies, it is more likely that the phrases referred to grammatical education: Matthaios is tasked with studying the conjugations of verbs (ῥῆμα) and "inflections" (κλίσις) in this letter.[22] Likewise, we are not certain about Makarios's remarks concerning "the vow(s)" (ⲉⲡⲁⲅⲅⲉⲗⲓⲁ), which also appears in another Coptic letter. In both cases, it may refer to an actual vow or promise, but it is preceded by a form of the verb "to read" in P.Kellis V Copt. 33, suggesting that it was an otherwise unknown text.[23]

There is little doubt about the meaning of "the *Apostolos*" in Makarios's letter ([ⲡⲁⲡ]ⲟⲥⲧⲟ̣ⲗⲟⲥ P.Kellis V Copt. 19.15–16), since this is the common name for the works of Paul in the Greek and Coptic orthodox tradition. Paul's letter to the *Romans* is labeled as such in one of the Oxyrhynchus papyri.[24] Sections of the New Testament *letter(s) to the Hebrews* and the *Romans* have been found

17 ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲛⲁϭ ⲛ̄ϣⲗⲏⲗ, P.Kellis V Copt. 19.16 and ⲡⲉⲩⲭⲱⲛ 19.84.

18 Gardner, "Manichaean Ritual Practice at Ancient Kellis," 257.

19 Compare with P.Kellis VI Copt. 56.18, the miniature codex with the amulet against a snake bite, which contains a number of empty pages which ends with the title (?) ⲧ̣ⲉⲡ̣ⲣⲟⲥⲉⲩⲭⲏ ⲛ̄ⲁ̄ⲃ̣[.....], "the prayer of Ab(raham?)," while the ⲉⲩⲭⲏ is received *from* Pebo in P.Kellis VII Copt. 66. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 55.

20 ⲡⲛⲁϭ ⲛⲉⲡⲓⲥⲧⲟⲗ[ⲓⲟⲛ], P.Kellis V Copt. 19. 82–83.

21 ϯⲉⲡⲓⲥⲧⲟvaⲥⲗⲏ, P.Kellis VII Copt. 120.13–14. Gardner considers the possibility of reading ⲉⲡⲓⲥⲧⲟⲗⲏ ⲉⲧ(ⲧ)ⲁⲃ̄ⲉ, "the letter that is sealed," but rejects it as "most unlikely." Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 256.

22 Cribiore's suggestion is noted in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 163. See also the alternative "study your verbs and inflexions" in Gardner, "Manichaean Ritual Practice at Ancient Kellis," 256n26.

23 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 219.

24 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 163. In Oxyrhynchus, a fragment with Rom. 1: 1–7 (P.Oxy. II 209) has "π̣[...]σ̣η ἀπόστολος" on the verso.

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TABLE 16 List of book titles in the Kellis letters

Text or book	Reference
"Prostrations" (?)	P.Kellis V Copt. 19.17 (ⲛ̄ⲕⲗⲓⲥⲓⲥ).
"Sayings" (?)	P.Kellis V Copt. 19.17 (ⲛ̄ⲣⲏⲙⲁ).
The vow(s) (?)	P.Kellis V Copt. 19.15 (ⲉⲡⲁⲅⲅⲉⲗⲓⲁ, presumably a practice, a vow) and P.Kellis V Copt. 33.7–8 (..ⲱϣ ⲛⲉ̣ⲡⲁⲅʼⲅⲉⲗⲓⲁ, "read the *epaggeliai* (pl.)").
The Judgment of Peter	P.Kellis V Copt. 19.15 and .84 (ⲧ̄ⲕⲣⲓⲥⲓⲥ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲧⲣⲟⲥ).
Apostolos	P.Kellis V Copt. 19.15 ([ⲡⲁⲡ]ⲟⲥⲧⲟ̣ⲗⲟⲥ) and P.Kellis VII Copt. 127.21 (ⲁⲡⲟⲥⲧⲟⲗ̣[ⲟⲥ]).
The Acts	P.Kellis VII Copt. 120.4 (ⲡⲣⲁⲝⲉⲓⲥ).
The Gospel	P.Kellis VII Copt. 120.5 (ⲡⲉⲩⲁⲅⲅⲉⲗⲓⲟⲛ) and P.Kellis VII Copt. 98.21[a] and P.Kellis V Copt. 33.3–4 (ϫⲱⲕ [ⲡⲉⲩⲁ] ⲅ̀ⲅⲉⲗⲓⲟⲛ, reconstructed).
The *Epistles*	P.Kellis V Copt. 19. 82–83 (ⲡⲛⲁϭ ⲛⲉⲡⲓⲥⲧⲟⲗ[ⲓⲟⲛ]) and P.Kellis VII Copt. 120.13–14 (ϯⲉⲡⲓⲥⲧⲟⲩⲁⲥⲗⲏ, diminutive?).
Psalms	P.Kellis V Copt. 19.13–14 (ⲛ̄ⲛ̣[ⲉⲕ]ⲯⲁⲗⲙⲟⲥ) and .16 (ⲛ̄ⲯⲁ̣[ⲗ] ⲙⲟⲥ ⲛ̣[ⲟⲩⲓⲁⲛ]ⲓⲛ, "the Greek *Psalms*").
The *Prayers*	P.Kellis V Copt. 19.16 (ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲛⲁϭ ⲛ̄ϣⲗⲏⲗ, "the great prayers") and .84 (ⲡⲉⲩⲭⲱⲛ). In P.Kellis VII Copt. 66.7–8 (ⲧⲉⲩⲭⲏ) it seems to be an expression ("the request of Pebo").

a Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 187.

in close proximity to the find location of Makarios's letter in House 3. The next item on Makarios's list, the *Judgment of Peter*, is difficult to identify, because there have been several apocryphal books attributed to Peter: the *Acts of Peter*, the *Revelation of Peter*, and the *Apocalypse of Peter*, stored in the Nag Hammadi Library. Unfortunately, none of these texts is known as the *Judgment of Peter*. The most plausible identification, thus far, can be made in reference to the fourth-century Christian author Rufinus, who spoke of *Peter's Judgment* as an alternative title for a text called the *Two Ways*.[25] The content of the *Two Ways*,

25 The *Two Ways* is the text of which a version is integrated in the *Didache*, the *Epistle of Barnabas*, and the *Doctrina Apostolorum*. Of course, one could wonder whether the Judaizing tendencies of some of these texts would have been present in the *Two* Ways, and how this would have related to the anti-Jewish stance of the Manichaeans. The identification of *Peter's Judgment* and the *Two Ways* is also made by Jerome and Optatus. R.E. Aldridge, "Peter and the 'Two Ways,'" *Vigiliae Christianae* 53, no. 3 (1999): 233–64;

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which we primarily know in its incarnation as the first chapters of the *Didache*, would have resonated with the ascetic stance and dualistic worldview of the Manichaeans. It does not seem too farfetched to find a boy in the Egyptian desert copying a version of this Christian text.

Two interpretations are available for the *Acts* that Makarios mentions. He could have been referring to one of the apocryphal *Acts of the Apostles* from the Christian tradition. If this is the case, the *Acts of John* would be an option, as one of the Greek papyri from Kellis contains a text with strong affiliations with the *Acts of John* (P.Kellis VI Gr 97). Did one of the Manichaean scribes in House 3 work on a Manichaean redaction or transmission of this text?[26] The absence of any specific designator for ⲡⲣⲁⲝⲉⲓⲥ, however, may suggest that a Manichaean book of acts was meant, for which no additional apostle name was required. In this case, the lost *Acts* codex from the Medinet Madi collection, containing an early Manichaean church history, is a plausible candidate.[27]

A final reference to book titles appears in three other Coptic letters. The anonymous author of P.Kellis V Copt. 33 asks whether "the little one" has completed the *Gospel*. Since the editors associate the handwriting in P.Kellis V Copt. 33 with the elect's letter P.Kellis V Copt. 32 (addressed to Eirene), one could suggest that the same elect asked for a copy of Mani's *Living Gospel*. The absence of explicit Manichaean terminology (except for the postscript by another scribe) would also allow for an interpretation in which the letter writer asks for a Christian gospel text. Letter P.Kellis VII Copt. 98 mentions ⲉⲩⲁⲅ̀ⲅⲉⲗⲓⲟⲛ in a fragmentary context that hampers interpretation. In P.Kellis VII Copt. 120, the same phrase clearly refers to a Christian or Manichaean text that should be sent over to be copied. As in the previous examples, the interpretation that connects the texts to Manichaeism is most likely, because of the close prosopographical connection to Manichaean elect and the prevalence of Manichaean liturgical documents at the specific find locations (see Appendix 1).

In summary, Matthaios may have had access to various Manichaean books. It is most likely that the Manichaean *Acts*, the *Living Gospel*, Mani's *Epistles*, and his *Psalms and Prayers* were circulated in Matthaios's immediate surroundings, alongside other Christian texts such as the *Judgement of Peter* and at least two New Testament letters.

J.D. Dubois, "Sur la notion d'apocryphe en milieu manichée," in *Apocryphité: histoire d'un concept transversal aux religions du livre*, ed. S.C. Mimouni (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002), 150–51 favors the *Apocalypse of Peter*.

26 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 256.

27 The content and the history of the codex is discussed in Robinson, *The Manichaean Codices of Medinet Madi*, 225–47.

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Local Reading Practices

Wooden boards and papyri containing ancient literary and theological texts have been found in close association with the personal letters.[28] What do we learn about the inhabitants of the Roman period houses if we look at the manuscripts they left behind? Following scholarship on textual transmission, we can assume that texts were only copied when they fulfilled a need or function in everyday life and liturgy. Without such use, the act of copying or buying a text was simply too expensive.[29] Now, what did the inhabitants of House 1–3 in Kellis read? Table 17 lists the texts found in their immediate vicinity. Most of the texts stemmed from a broad educational and religious background, except for the text directly related to Manichaean ritual practices. These manuscripts can be divided into three broad categories: (1) Manichaean texts, (2) biblical and apocryphal texts, and (3) classical texts.

TABLE 17 List of literary texts, excluding liturgical Manichaean texts (Psalms and Prayers)

Document	Description
T.Kellis II Copt. 1	Doctrinal text (*Kephalaia* type, or a brief catechism).
P.Kellis II Copt. 5	Fragment. Astrological? *Kephalaia*?
P.Kellis II Copt. 8	Doctrinal text (shares terminology with *Kephalaia*).
P.Kellis II Copt. 9	*Hebrews* 12:4–13.
P.Kellis VI Gr. 97 A1	Compilation based on material from the *Acts of John*.
P.Kellis II Copt. 6	*Romans* 2:6–29.
P.Kellis II Gr. 93	An invocation (?) resembling Sethian literature (?).
P.Kellis VI Copt. 53	Canonical (?) *Epistle*(*s*) of Mani.
P.Kellis VI Copt. 54	Pseudo epigraphical (?) *Epistle*(*s*) of Mani (?).
P.Kellis III Gr. 95	Isocrates codex, including *Ad Demonicum, Ad Nicoclem*, and a large part of the *Nicocles* (on wooden tablets).

28 As Willy Clarysse pointed out, the connection between literary and documentary papyri is often very superficial and accidental, even when they are found together. W. Clarysse, "Literary Papyri in Documentary 'Archives'," in *Egypt and the Hellenistic World*, ed. E. van 't Dack, P. van Dessel, and W. van Gucht (Leuven: Peeters, 1983), 47.

29 I.S. Gilhus, "Contextualizing the Present, Manipulating the Past: Codex II from Nag Hammadi and the Challenge of Circumventing Canonicity," in *Canon and Canonicity: The Formation and Use of Scripture*, ed. E. Thomassen (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2010), 96.

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The classical texts stand out from the larger number of religious texts. There is no apparent reason to connect the Isocrates codex with Manichaeans, apart from its find location in House 2. The codex contains three orations attributed to Isocrates, a fourth-century BCE Athenian rhetor whose orations belonged to classical rhetorical curriculum. The text was owned and copied by a local schoolmaster, who added simple explanations of words in the margins of the pages to explain difficult terms to his students.[30] Some texts from the temple area in Kellis derive from a similar educational setting, including a copy of Demosthenes's oration on the crown (*De Corona*), fragments of Homer's work, and a text with a parody of Homer.[31] The scattered material remains – several pens, ostraca, and fragments from inscribed boards – make it clear that a teacher once used one of the shrines in the temple area to teach classical literature and rhetoric.[32] The presence of the Isocrates codex in House 2 may have been due to Ammonios the schoolteacher, who has been identified in his son's letter found in House 3 (P.Kellis I Gr. 69).[33] Prosopographical connections with either Pamour I (P.Kellis I Gr. 31, dated in 306 CE) or Philammon I (P.Kellis I Gr. 65) bring this schoolteacher closer to the Manichaeans. Dubois takes this connection a step further by suggesting that *if* Ammonios is to be identified with the Ammon of the Coptic letters, he could have belonged to Makarios's immediate circle of acquaintances (P.Kellis V Copt. 21, 22, and 37).

Even without this last identification, the connections between neighbors are real enough.[34] A Coptic writing exercise (P.Kellis V Copt. 10) and a school exercise (P.Kellis I Gr. 90) have been found at Houses 1 and 3, both on reused wooden boards. The material evidence for carpentry activities in House 2, moreover, suggests that one of the neighbors was responsible for producing the wooden tablets for the Isocrates codex (see chapter 1). How did these neighbors interact with the Manichaeans? Did Manichaean scribes receive their education solely within their Manichaean network, or is it more probable that

30 Worp and Rijksbaron, *The Kellis Isocrates Codex*, 28–29, 56–7.

31 K.A. Worp, "A New Demosthenes Fragment from Kellis," *Symbolae Osloenses* 89, no. 1 (2015): 148–55; Hope and Worp, "Miniature Codices from Kellis," 232.

32 Hope and Worp, "Miniature Codices from Kellis," 232.

33 Dubois, "Greek and Coptic Documents from Kellis," 23–24. I agree with his rejection of the interpretation of the teacher as a member of the Manichaean hierarchy, but do not see how P.Kellis I Gr. 69 alludes to almsgiving.

34 Dubois's interpretations, however, cannot be followed in all details. Father Ammonios cannot be identified with the Ammonios in the generation of Makarios (who was active in the 350s CE), if the son Petechon was active in at the beginnings of the fourth century (306 CE). *Contra* Dubois, "Greek and Coptic Documents from Kellis," 23; Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 21.

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they were also taught at a local school, such as the one found in Trimithis?[35] Makarios's letter to Matthaios suggests that Matthaios had to practice his handwriting during his father's absence, maybe with a teacher in the village. In this case, it is not impossible that he read and copied classical texts by Homer, Demosthenes, and Isocrates before specializing in his group-specific educational practices – about which we know next to nothing.[36] In fact, the finds in these houses make it most likely that Matthaios and other individuals were educated locally before continuing their education with specifically Christian or Manichaean texts.

The second subset of texts found in Kellis consists of biblical and apocryphal texts. The presence of biblical fragments is hardly a surprise, as Manichaeans extensively used Christian texts in their own works.[37] Apart from the close relationship between Mani and Jesus in the Manichaean self-understanding, Paul is listed as one of the last of the righteous before Mani's apostolate (1 Keph. 1 11.26–14.1). The discovery of a fragment of the *Letter to the Romans* is therefore entirely in line with Manichaean theology. The section found at Kellis contains Pauline polemic against the Jewish law, a message that would have struck a chord with Manichaean readers.[38] The original papyrus may have been imported from Nile valley, or copied from a Sahidic model.[39] Another biblical fragment contains a section of the *Letter to the Hebrews* with significant variants in the text. The language is more closely related to the L-variations. The papyrus's size suggests that it was part of an exercise rather than a full codex.[40] The passage itself contains an admonition – not too different from Makarios's instructions to Matthaios – to be strong and to endure hardship because this is how God trains his children (Hebr. 12: 4–13). Since this text was generally

35 Cribiore, Davoli, and Ratzan, "A Teacher's Dipinto from Trimithis (Dakhleh Oasis)," 179–91.

36 Monks used Homer to practice their writing and various composite schoolbooks contained both Christian and traditional texts. S. Bucking, "Christian Educational Texts from Egypt: A Preliminary Inventory," in *Akten des 21. Internationalen Papyrologenkongresses, Berlin 1995*, ed. B. Kramer (Stuttgart: B.G. Teubner, 1997), 132–38; K.O. Sandnes, *The Challenge of Homer: School, Pagan Poets and Early Christianity* (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2009); J.H.F. Dijkstra, "A World Full of the Word: The Biblical Learning of Dioscorus," in *Learned Antiquity: Scholarship and Society in the Near-East, the Greco-Roman World, and the Early Medieval West*, ed. A.A. MacDonald, M.W. Twomey, and G.J. Reinink (Leuven: Brepols, 2003), 135–46; M.R. Hauge and A.W. Pitt, eds., *Ancient Education and Early Christianity* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016).

37 Pedersen et al., *The Old Testament in Manichaean Tradition*; Pedersen et al., *The New Testament Gospels in Manichaean Tradition*.

38 Gardner, *KLT1*, 90.

39 Gardner, *KLT1*, 81.

40 Gardner, *KLT1*, 100.

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attributed to Paul in antiquity, it may have been one of Matthaios's scribal exercises, following his father's call to copy "the *Apostolos*" ([ⲡⲁⲡ]ⲟⲥⲧⲟ̣ⲗⲟⲥ P.Kellis V Copt. 19.15–16).[41]

A third and fourth manuscript fragment derive from broader ancient Christian literary traditions. P.Kellis VI Gr. 97, A1 contains a fragmentary text with strong affiliations with the themes and topics of the *Acts of John*. The text is combined in a codex with fragments from a Manichaean psalm and an unknown Greek text. Text A1 either draws upon textual traditions that form the foundation for the *Acts of John*, or develops it into a new composition with a Manichaean emphasis.[42] The only significant Manichaean interpolation, however, is the inclusion of the phrase "holy church," which was also used in some of the personal letters.[43] The so-called Sethian invocation from Kellis (P.Kellis II Gr. 93), written on a small piece of papyrus, may not have been Sethian, nor an invocation. It is associated with Sethian literature on the basis of the word αὐτογένους, which is central to the gnostic literature conventionally brought together under the label of Sethianism. The connection with this genre is, unfortunately, fragile, because of the piece's fragmentary nature.[44] If the fragment derived from a Sethian gnostic text, this would bolster recent explorations into the possibility of a Manichaean influence on or transmission of some of the Nag Hammadi documents.[45] P.Kellis II Gr. 93 and P.Kellis VI Gr. 97, A1, thus, provide two small pieces of a puzzle, rather than giving straightforward answers about a Manichaean readership. They should remind us that the scribes and readers of these texts did not necessarily distinguish between Manichaean, gnostic, and apocryphal texts.

41 Paul is also cited in one of the abbreviated psalms from Kellis. "[L]isten also to Paul" which is followed by the first word of a new line "the proclaimer." This must have meant simply "Paul, the evangelist." ⲥ̣ⲱⲧⲙ ϩⲱϥ ⲉⲡⲁⲩⲗⲟⲥ ⲡⲣⲉϥⲧⲁϣⲉⲁⲉⲓϣ T.Kellis II Copt. 2, text A2 36–37.

42 Gardner, *KLT2*, 96–97; G. Jenkins, "Papyrus 1 from Kellis: A Greek Text with Affinities to the Acts of John," in *The Apocryphal Acts of John*, ed. J.N. Bremmer (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1995), 197–230.

43 P.J. Lalleman, *The Acts of John* (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 8n16; O. Zwierlein, "Die Datierung der Acta Iohannis und der Papyrus Kellis Gr. Fragm. A.I," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 174 (2010): 62–84.

44 Gardner, *KLT1*, 142.

45 T. Pettipiece, "Towards a Manichaean Reading of the Nag Hammadi Codices," *Journal of the Canadian Society for Coptic Studies* 3–4 (2012): 43–54; R. Falkenberg, "What Has Nag Hammadi to Do with Medinet Madi? The Case of Eugnostos and Manichaeism," in *The Nag Hammadi Codices and Late Antique Egypt*, ed. H. Lundhaug and L. Jenott (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018), 261–86.

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The third subset of text fragments is directly related to Manichaeism. Since the fragments of the psalms and prayers have been discussed in chapter 5, I will focus on pastoral and doctrinal texts here. These so-called "doctrinal" Manichaean texts confirm our earlier observations about psalm fragments: the Manichaeans in Kellis not only produced manuscripts in order to send them to the Nile valley, but kept them for internal usage as well.

Fragments from two codices contain the text of Mani's *Epistles* (P.Kellis VI Copt. 53 and maybe also P.Kellis VI Copt. 54). Specifically, as Gardner has argued, eleven leaves of one codex include letters known from the list of Mani's *Epistles* in the tenth-century *Fihrist*.[46] While Latin, Middle Persian, and Sogdian texts included citations from Mani's *Epistles*, the Kellis text provides the first substantial reading of previously unknown letters. P.Kellis VI Copt. 53 contains the last page of an unknown epistle, followed by the so-called *Sickness letter* (otherwise known as the *Epistle of the Ten Words*), in which Mani describes his own bodily suffering before engaging with pastoral issues.[47] The pastoral tone is less devoid of conflict in the *Enemy letter* – which was likewise included in the codex – as a rather lengthy section deals with people who seek to discredit individual Manichaeans before Mani. These accusations were "proclaimed in envy," according to the letter, and those who uttered them "did neither read it nor pronounce it … nor did they write these letters."[48] More elaborately, the letter employs the metaphor of an athlete, a priest, and a farmer to remind the readers to endure the foolishness of their brothers, to serve them, and to bring their "fruits" to their master (P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 42.14–25). These sections work well within the Manichaean context of almsgiving and the tensions that could arise between elect and catechumens. The *Sickness letter* and the *Enemy letter* also convey a strong Manichaean identity centered on Mani's own work, and communicate an antagonistic relationship with "the sects and the world" and the "bondage of the world and the bondage of the body."[49] The antagonism that surfaces, Mani's own role as founder, and the frequent appearance of ecclesiastical titles create the impression of a fully formed Manichaean religion with institutions and conflict management procedures.

The second codex consisted of various fragments from one papyrus leaf containing another letter (P.Kellis VI Copt. 54). This text resembles Mani's *Epistles*;

46 Gardner, *KLT2*, 74–75 and 75–77.

47 Gardner, *KLT2*, 13; Gardner, "Once More," 293–5 on sections of Mani's *Epistles* in other languages.

48 ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲩⲧⲉⲟⲩⲁⲩ [ϩⲛ̄ ⲟⲩ]ⲫⲑⲟⲛⲟⲥ and ⲉ̣[ⲙ]ⲡ̣ⲟ̣ⲩⲁ[ϣ]ⲥ̀ ⲉⲙⲡⲟⲩⲧⲉⲟ[ⲩⲁⲥ. . . .] ⲟ̣ⲩ̣ⲧ̣ⲉ ⲉ̣[ⲙ]ⲡⲟⲩⲥϩⲉï ⲛⲓⲉⲡⲓ[ⲥⲧⲟⲗⲁⲩⲉ] P.Kellis VI Copt. 53, 62.13–14 and 2–3.

49 ⲛⲇⲟⲅⲙⲁ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲕⲟⲥⲙⲟⲥ P.Kellis VI Copt. 53 51.14 and ⲧⲙⲉⲣⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲕⲟⲥⲙⲟⲥ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲧⲙⲉⲣⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲥⲱⲙⲁ 41.15–16.

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its theme connects closely to the "letter of Abā, love" mentioned in the *Fihrist*, and the so-called *Letter of the Seal* that Mani wrote before his imprisonment.[50] If this letter is a reworking of themes from Mani's letters, it provides us with a local example of the reworking of Mani's *Epistles* into a pseudepigraphical genre. Pseudepigraphical letters of Mani are known outside of Egypt, where they were used to craft polemical rhetoric against competing Christian and Manichaean theological positions.[51] As Baker-Brian concludes: "The effort that went into producing epistolary forgeries bearing Mani's name is a clear indication of the formidable reputation that Mani had established for himself as one of the most prolific letter writers in Late Antiquity."[52] P.Kellis VI Copt. 54 lacks polemical content, but places an emphasis on loving relationships among teachers, wise ones, bishops, disciples, brothers, and sisters, as the constituents of a "single undivided body" ([ⲟⲩⲥ]ⲱ̣ⲙⲁ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲱⲧ ⲛ̄ⲁⲧⲡⲱⲣϫ P.Kellis VI Copt 54.54). This unity is to be found in devotion to Mani's wisdom revealed in books, leading the author to urge his audience to "devote yourself to what is written."[53] As the letters collected in P.Kellis VI Copt. 53 do, this letter promotes unity under Mani's wisdom and encourages loving relationships between catechumens and members of the Manichaean ecclesiastical hierarchy. It shows that the Kellis community was familiar with an institutionalized group-style, even though it may have been far from the flexible arrangements they experienced in their daily lives.[54]

The Manichaeans in Kellis knew various *Kephalaia*-traditions, as shown in the previous chapters. At least two papyri and one wooden board from Kellis have features that are similar to the long Coptic compositions of the *Kephalaia of the Teacher* and the *Kephalaia of the Wisdom of my Lord Mani*. A small

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50 Similarities have also been found in 1 Keph 63 (on love). Gardner, *KLT2*, 85; Gardner, "Once More," 310–14. The passage of the *Fihrist* is translated in B. Dodge, ed., *The Fihrist of Al-Nadīm: A Tenth-Century Survey of Muslim Culture*, vol. 2 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 799–801.

51 Baker-Brian, *Manichaeism*, 90. The fifth-century letters are discussed in Lieu, *Manichaeism in Mesopotamia*, 109–12. The letter to Menoch is discussed in Harrison and BeDuhn, "The Authenticity and Doctrine of (Ps.?) Mani's Letter to Menoch," 128–72. The letter of Mani to Mar Ammo, among an eastern schismatic Manichaean movement is translated in Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road*, 259–60. Cf. M. Boyce, *A Reader in Manichaean Middle Persian and Parthian* (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 50.

52 Baker-Brian, *Manichaeism*, 90.

53 ⲡⲣⲟⲥⲉⲭⲉ ⲁⲣⲱⲧⲛ̄ ⲉⲧⲃ[ⲉ ⲡⲉ]ⲧ̣ⲥⲏϩ P.Kellis VI Copt. 54. 16–17.

54 Teigen, *The Manichaean Church in Kellis*, 266–69 takes these texts as indication of the existence of institutionalized Manichaeism with a fully formed hierarchical structure. Against this position, I would argue that we cannot take this pious rhetorical fiction as in any way reflecting everyday life in Kellis. Cf. the discursive construction of early Christian communities by competing itinerant religious specialists and their genealogical claims in the *Acts of the Apostles* and Paul's letters. J. Rüpke, *Pantheon: A New History of Roman Religion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 355–58.

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wooden board, measuring 74 by 55 mm, contains a highly structured treatise on the nature of "the Father." (T.Kellis II Copt. 1). "The Father" in this instance is not the Father of Greatness, but the Third Ambassador, one of the beings from the third emanation, whose cosmological work is central in several *Kephalaia* chapters (including 1 Keph. 20, 34, 46, 55, and 66). The catechetical style of the writing and the fivefold characterization of the father strongly resemble the *Kephalaia of the Teacher*. Gardner considers the text to be a "flip card" and "brief catechism," as the size of the wooden board and its use of numerical sequences could have aided the transmission of Manichaean doctrine.[55] He also detects textual similarities with the Kephalaia in P.Kellis II Copt. 8, a poorly preserved text on a single codex leaf (resembling 1 Keph. 159).[56] Such short summaries containing organized sections of Mani's lectures may have derived from "proto-*Kephalaia*" traditions that were reworked into the longer didactic narratives of the *Kephalaia* books found at Medinet Madi.[57] These two texts also demonstrate that the Manichaeans in Kellis had knowledge of – and textual engagement with – the cosmological system, even though it may not have been embedded within the *common sense* of everyday life.[58]

In addition to locating these texts in the development of the Manichaean tradition, Gardner postulates that these documents had a missionary background. They show the "evangelical technique of the Manichaean community," which only gradually introduced Manichaean elements that were dissimilar to Christianity. In fact, he states, "[C]atechumens would then be slowly drawn into the community and gradually introduced to the higher knowledge of Mani's revelation."[59] In another publication, Gardner and Lieu suggest that the Kellis letters show little interest in Manichaean cosmology, while the other Kellis texts reveal "how carefully the hierarchy attempted to draw adherents further into the church and the knowledge of truth."[60] Curiously, T.Kellis II Copt. 1 and P.Kellis II Copt. 8 seem to indicate the exact opposite: they show that cosmological knowledge was available, even though it played a minor role

55 Gardner, *KLT1*, 2. Note the allusion to Phil. 2:7, discussed in Pedersen et al., *The Old Testament in Manichaean Tradition*, 11.

56 Gardner, *KLT1*, 96–7, where Gardner also points to a parallel in a Parthian text (translated in Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road*, 230–1, text E). The publication of Funk's edition of 1 Keph. 159 has not brought to light more similarities, but confirms Gardner's analysis that "they are not the same; but they do share certain terminology."

57 Pettipiece, *Pentadic Redaction*, 12.

58 BeDuhn argues that the vast majority of the transempirical beings in Manichaean texts are only listed in a didactical manner, hardly ever receiving praise in direct and personal devotion. J.D. BeDuhn, "Devotional and Didactic Pantheons at Kellis, Medinet Madi, and Beyond," lecture at the IAMS Symposium *Manichaeism in Egypt: The Medinet Madi Library after 90 Years* (18 October 2019).

59 Both citations are from Gardner, *KLT1*, 4.

60 Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 9. Here they also explain that they see the *Kephalaia* as a "handbook for the elect."

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in the personal letters. The illegible lines on the backside of T.Kellis II Copt. 1 suggest that the text was used in scribal exercises, perhaps even for boys like Matthaios, who became acquainted with Manichaean doctrine accordingly.

The Syriac Connection

A number of papyri stand out because they contain Syriac writing, something highly uncommon in the Egyptian desert (Table 18). Sometimes, the Syriac emerges only as a faint line written before the first line of a Coptic document (P.Kellis VII Copt. 57), or some traces are revealed on the back of a writing exercise (P.Kellis V Copt. 10). In other instances, full lists of Syriac Manichaean phrases are matched with their Coptic equivalents, and include single words like "love" and "fruits," as well as more elaborate Manichaean doctrine about the transfer of Light to the sun and the moon (T.Kellis II Syr./Copt. 1 and 2).[61] The presence of these documents indicates a transregional connection with Manichaean traditions from outside of Egypt.

TABLE 18 List of documents with Syriac writing

Document	Location and description
P.Kellis VI Syr. 2	(Structure D/8), extremely fragmentary.
P.Kellis V Copt. 10	(House 1) writing exercise of Coptic alphabet, with traces of an earlier religious (?) Syriac text.
P.Kellis VII Copt. 57	(House 3) reused text with traces of Syriac above the first line.
T.Kellis II Syr./Copt. 1 and 2	(House 3) Wordlists or writing exercises (?) with explicit Manichaean content.
P.Kellis II Syr. 1	(House 3) Multiple fragments, some may have contained a Syriac amulet or divination text.
P.Kellis II Syr./Gr. 1	(House 3) Single codex leaf, Greek and Syriac on parchment. May have been part of a Manichaean (or otherwise religious) text.
P.Kellis I Gr. 67	(House 3) Syriac address.

61 T.Kellis II Syr./Copt. 2.2–30 and 67–72. Alternative readings and translations are found in A. Camplani, "From Ismant Al-Kharab to Nag Hammadi: Some Observations about Ideological Diversity in Fourth Century Groups of Coptic Manuscripts," *Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni* 86 no. 1 (2020): 122–127.

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The engagement with Syriac texts in Kellis has been understood in several ways. The editor located the texts within the "process of becoming fully accommodated to its surrounding culture," even though earlier generations of missionaries must have been responsible for the translations.[62] Since Mani wrote almost all of his books in Syriac (with the exception of the Šābuhragān in Middle Persian), Syriac texts have played a major role in attempts to reconstruct the earliest Manichaean history and doctrine. Newly arrived Syriac-speaking missionaries might have used the Kellis glossaries in missionary activity or while copying Manichaean psalms.[63] This scenario might also explain why the Egyptian letters of the Coptic alphabet had to be practiced on a wooden board (with traces of a Syriac text). Earlier discoveries of Syriac Manichaean texts included papyri from Oxyrhynchus, a parchment fragment with so-called Manichaean script (a cursive form of Syriac, strongly associated with Manichaean texts)[64] bought by the British Museum and associated with Ashmunain (ancient Hermopolis Magna), parchment fragments previously owned by the Coptologist Allberry, parchment fragments from the Berlin Papyrus collection, and a papyrus from the Heidelberg collection.[65] Most of these documents are extremely fragmentary, and they do not stem from a secure archaeological setting, like the texts found in Kellis. Where legible, these Syriac fragments from Egypt contain astronomical terminology, cosmological descriptions (similar to the Manichaean narratives), religious words, and some explicitly Manichaean phrases. Pedersen argues that the Berlin fragments may have derived from a canonical Manichaean book (specifically, Mani's *Book of Giants*), but the evidence is inconclusive.[66] If these fragments indeed derived from Manichaean texts, they may confirm Manichaean narratives about the early diffusion of Manichaeism throughout the Roman Empire.

The Syriac texts from Kellis have been understood, alternatively, as indicating Egyptian-speaking scribes learning Syriac. Rather than deriving from an early generation of Syriac speaking missionaries bringing Manichaean books into the Roman Empire, the two Syriac/Coptic glossaries may point in the opposite direction. In this scenario, the Syriac was written first on the two glossaries from Kellis, and several scribal hands added Coptic translations

62 Gardner, *KLT1*, vii.

63 The terminology in the Kellis glossaries corresponds with the Manichaean *Psalmbook*. S.F. Johnson, "Introduction: The Social Presence of Greek in Eastern Christianity, 200–1200 CE," in *Languages and Cultures of Eastern Christianity: Greek*, ed. S.F. Johnson (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 37–40.

64 Pedersen and Larsen, *Manichaean Texts in Syriac*, 113–185.

65 Some of these were published in Burkitt, *The Religion of the Manichees*, 111–120. Discussed in Blumell and Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus*, 337–40.

66 Pedersen and Larsen, *Manichaean Texts in Syriac*, 204–231.

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afterwards, including mistakes and corrections.[67] On T.Kellis II Syr./Copt. 2, side b, the Coptic words and sentences have even been altered to fit around the Syriac phrases. Franzmann concludes from these mistakes that the scribes were not truly bilingual in Syriac and Coptic, nor were they directly working with a capable Syriac speaker. They struggled to understand the meaning of the Syriac phrases. Maybe their scribal exercises were only corrected after some time?[68] We know the names of two Syriac-speakers in the region: Ision and Apa Lysimachos. The latter writes: "Send a well-proportioned and nicely executed ten-page notebook for your brother Ision. For he has become a user of Greek and a comprehensive reader."[69] Gardner reinterprets the last two words as "Syriac reader" (ἀναγνώστης συριαττικός instead of the initial ἀναγνώστης συναγτικός).[70] The adjective "Syriac" (συριαττικός) indicates that Ision was not only the lector (lit. "reader") in a Manichaean church, but was also responsible for certain Syriac texts. The fact that Lysimachos signed his own name in Syriac on the letter's back indicates that he was also able to read and write in Syriac. Hence, at least one of the elect was able to write the language.[71]

Could it be that Ision was trained to read Syriac texts out loud for communal Manichaean gatherings? Gardner suggests that "the community in their first century in Egypt found real value in maintaining Syriac usage in church, and one can well imagine that certain central texts such as (e.g.) Mani's *Living Gospel* or *Letter of the Seal* might have first been read in Syriac before receiving a vernacular translation and exposition."[72] This suggestion connects with Pedersen's interpretation that the Syriac fragments housed in Berlin contain

67 M. Franzmann, "The Syriac-Coptic Bilinguals from Ismant El-Kharab (Roman Kellis): Translation Porcess and Manichaean Missionary Practice," in *Il manicheismo: nuove prospettive della richerca*, ed. L. Cirillo and A. van Tongerloo (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), 117. The edition of the Syriac texts in the first volume of the *Coptic Documentary Texts* should be consulted, as it replaces the edition in the first volume of *Literary Texts*. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 344–64. On the use of the Syriac language and the so-called "Manichaean script," see Pedersen and Larsen, *Manichaean Texts in Syriac*, 3–4, 113–20, 132–37.

68 Franzmann, "The Syriac-Coptic Bilinguals from Ismant El-Kharab," 117, 120.

69 Πινακίδιον εὔμετρον καὶ ἀστῖον δέκα πτυχῶν πέμψον τῷ ἀδελφῷσου Ἰσίωνι. Ἑλληνιστὴς γὰρ γέγονεν καὶ ἀναγνώστης συναγτικός P.Kellis I Gr. 67.17–21, the Greek is cited from Worp's edition.

70 Gardner, "P. Kellis I 67 Revisited," 227. This reconstruction is accepted in Pedersen and Larsen, *Manichaean Texts in Syriac*, 12. Earlier discussions of the phrase ἀναγνώστης are included in A. Jördens, "Buchbesprechung Worp, Greek Papyri from Kellis I," *Münstersche Beiträge zur antiken Handelsgeschichte* 17, no. 1 (1998): 130; Ioannidou, "A Note on συναγτικός," 162.

71 Gardner, "P. Kellis I 67 Revisited," 224. In contrast to Oerter, I do not think this indicates that Syriac was a living language in Kellis. Oerter, "Bedeutung der Manichaica aus Kellis," 110.

72 Gardner, "P. Kellis I 67 Revisited," 227.

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Mani's own words.[73] If this is true, we may have a priceless clue in the Kellis texts about the role of Syriac in the Manichaean liturgy. It would have stood out as an exceptional practice: Reading aloud in an unfamiliar language tapped into a specific Manichaean groupness that was not encountered anywhere else.

Materiality: The Use of the Codex and Wooden Tablets

The writing material found in Kellis adds significantly to our understanding of Manichaean scribal culture. While the rise of the codex is frequently associated with Christianity, it is clear that Manichaeans also embraced the codex early on.[74] This may have been due to practical reasons: the codex was cheaper to produce (both sides of the page could be used for writing), easier to manipulate (as there was no need to unroll it), portable, and allowed for relative freedom to quote specific passages and move from text to text.[75] The technology and materiality of Christian and Manichaean books, thus, facilitated a specific type of reading practice, setting them apart as "religion[s] of the paperback," rather than religions of the book.[76]

Some paperbacks were *really* small. Miniature codices (smaller than 76 mm in height and width) were produced as cheap objects, easy to hide, convenient for transportation, but more difficult for scribes to produce.[77] The most well-known Manichaean miniature codex is the Greek biography of Mani (CMC), which measures 45 mm by 35 mm and contains 192 pages: the smallest known manuscript from antiquity. Just like other miniature codices, it may have been made for private reading sessions with a rather small group, as the size would have prevented any liturgical reading in a larger assembly.[78] Various miniature

73 Pedersen and Larsen, *Manichaean Texts in Syriac*, 204–10. If Syriac remained in use as a church language, this would stand in contrast to the claims in the *Kephalaia* that Manichaeism was a vernacular movement (1 Keph. 151).

74 G.G. Stroumsa, "Early Christianity: A Religion of the Book?," in *Homer, the Bible, and Beyond: Literary and Religious Canons in the Ancient World*, ed. M. Finkelberg and G.G. Stroumsa (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 153–73; R.S. Bagnall, *Early Christian Books in Egypt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 70–90 is rather sceptical about the innovative role of Christians. See also R. Lane Fox, "Literacy and Power in Early Christianity," in *Literacy and Power in the Ancient World*, ed. A.K. Bowman and G. Woolf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 126–48.

75 Stroumsa, "The Scriptural Movement of Late Antiquity and Christian Monasticism," 66.

76 Stroumsa, *The End of Sacrifice*, 43.

77 Choat counted 57 Coptic miniature codices, of which 35 are "sacred texts," "prayers," and "liturgy." Luijendijk adds another 9 with divinatory texts. Luijendijk, *Forbidden Oracles?*, 51–56.

78 Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 235. The CMC shows no trace of typical amulet texts, which could be rather small. Other divinatory miniature codices were used in intimate

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codices have been found in Kellis, including school exercises, amulets, and Manichaean texts. T.Kellis II Copt. 1 is a small wooden tablet (74 × 54 mm) with a short doctrinal statement. P.Kellis II Gr. 91 (42 × 57 mm) and 92 (46 × 74 mm, both on papyrus) have been interpreted as amulets because of their small size, but were probably Manichaean hymns of praise (as is P.Kellis II Gr. 94, which is slightly larger, 82 × 50 mm on wood). The documents do not show any trace of wear that would suggest they were carried as amulets or hidden from sight. Instead, the small size reflects the fact that scribes used material that was available, especially when the texts were used for exercises (recall the complaints about the price of papyrus in P.Kellis V Copt. 39.20, P.Kellis VII Copt. 78, and 79).[79]

Another material aspect stands out: wood was frequently used for Manichaean texts. Appendix 1 lists at least thirty-six documents written on wood. Some of these wooden objects were clearly made from cheap material that was easily available (P. Gascou 83), while others were tablets or full wooden codices made from a higher quality of wood. The latter category includes the Isocrates codex (nine boards with text on both sides), the KAB (eight boards with text on both sides), four miniature wooden codices with school exercises from the temple area (TM 91945, 48–50), and two codices with Manichaean psalms.[80] T.Kellis II Copt. 2 consisted of five boards; four were scrubbed clean for reuse, while the fifth still contained text. This codex was found bound together with a second wooden codex of seven cleaned boards (T.Kellis II Copt. 3). When the new codex was constructed, additional holes were drilled and the top of the inscribed board was cut off.[81] It is most probable that boards containing Manichaean texts from the other two originals were scrubbed off and bound into the new codex for reuse. This may have been done after the scribes disposed of the wooden boards or as part of a novel attempt to bring together an anthology of Manichaean psalms.

Why was wood used for liturgical texts? Late antique scribes used wood for working copies, teachers' models, or business accounts, and sometimes for amulets and horoscopes. With a few exceptions, it was never used for personal

gatherings at shrines or at home. Luijendijk, *Forbidden Oracles?*, 53 and 84–91 on church regulations concerning divination.

79 Bruyn, *Making Amulets Christian*, 232. On the cost of book manufacturing, see Bagnall, *Early Christian Books in Egypt*, 50–69.

80 Other Manichaean texts on wood include: T.Kellis II Copt. 1 (a doctrinal text about the Father), T.Kellis II Copt. 4, 5, 6, 7 (psalms), T.Kellis II Syr./Copt. 1 and 2 (bilingual glossary).

81 Gardner, *KLT1*, 8–9 highlights that the text was thus originally part of another codex. J.L. Sharpe, "Dakhleh Oasis Project: The Kellis Codices," *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* XVII, no. 4 (1987): 192–97 only discusses the KAB and Isocrates codex.

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letters that had to be carried by travelers.[82] They chose this material not only because of its price, but also because of its function in liturgical and educational settings. Unlike papyrus, a wooden tablet could be brought to gatherings and held steady without risking damage to it. It could be held up for multiple people to read (although the handwriting's size seems to contradict this) or pinned to the wall for the purpose of close reading or study.

The liturgical function is most visible in the single legible page of T.Kellis II Copt. 2, which contains abbreviated psalms for communal singing. Instead of providing the singers with the full psalm text, only the first couple of words of each new line of verse are given.[83] The lines break off, sometimes even in the middle of a word, even though the sentence has hardly begun. I concur with Gardner that it functioned as a memory aid for those performing the psalm in a congregational setting.[84] The text would have helped the singers to remember the beginning of each line correctly. Other wooden boards with similar anthologies of Greek and Coptic psalms and prayers from the sixth century parallel T.Kellis II Copt. 2. Such books of hours (sometimes called *horologion*) contained the psalms and prayers of the liturgy for official readers and singers.[85] In chapter 6, I argued that the abbreviated psalms of T.Kellis II Copt. 2 belonged to the performative setting of a commemoration of the departed

82 The exceptions are SB 24 15919, P.Kellis V Copt. 42, P.Kellis VII Copt. 57 and 83. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 9. Cf. K.A. Worp, "A New Survey of Greek, Coptic, Demotic and Latin Tabulae Preserved from Classical Antiquity Version 1.0," *Trismegistos Online Publications* TOP 6 (2012). A large set of inscribed wooden boards have been found over the last years at Vindolanda (UK), the majority written before 102 CE. A. Sarri, *Material Aspects of Letter Writing in the Graeco-Roman World: C. 500 BC–C. AD 300* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), 79–84. On the use of wood for amulets, see Bruyn, *Making Amulets Christian*, 46–7; A. Delattre and K.A. Worp, "Trois tablettes de bois du musée de Leyde," *Chronique d'Egypte* 87, no. 2 (2012): 379–82. Generally, wood was more expensive than papyrus or ostraca. Wood had, however, several advantages which made it more useful for teachers' models: it could be passed around without extreme care, it could be displayed in a classroom or used for close range copying by students. R. Cribiore, *Writing, Teachers, and Students in Graeco-Roman Egypt* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 125.

83 The collection of various psalms in an anthology is not unprecedented; see the edition of M315 in I. Colditz, "Hymnen an Šād-Ohrmezd: Ein Beitrag zur frühen Geschichte der Dinawariya in Transoxanien," *Altorientalische Forschungen* 19, no. 2 (1992): 330–33. I have not found other parallels, in particular because in T.Kellis II Copt. 2, text A2 provides only the beginning of every second complete line. Gardner, *KLT1*, 19.

84 Gardner, "A Manichaean Liturgical Codex," 37. The alternative interpretation, cited on page 52, is that they were used in a scribal exercise.

85 Worp's survey of wooden tablets includes other liturgical compositions, for example, P.488 Yale (sixth century CE), which starts with a prayer and continues with several psalms and a doxology. H. Quecke, "Erhebet euch, Kinder des Lichtes!," *Le Muséon* 76 (1963): 27–45. Cf. G.W. Woolfenden, *Daily Liturgical Prayer: Origins and Theology* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2004), 171–84.

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(see Table 15 for the content of this wooden codex). The other Manichaean texts on wood may have served similar purposes in liturgical or educational gatherings.[86]

Identifying Manichaean Scribes

Throughout Late Antiquity, book writing took place within informal social networks of scribes, readers, and elite benefactors who ordered copies for their libraries.[87] While the latter are not entirely visible in the Kellis papyri, we do see how scribes were trained, exchanged texts, and quarreled about the fate of the books they copied. The personal letters not only mention book titles, but they also shed light on the identity of some of the scribes, as well as their procedures.

Ouales's letter P.Kellis V Copt. 35 is the most informative, as it starts with an explanation of why Ouales did not send the requested spell, but rather an alternative. It turns out that the original text was lost because it was "written on a small fragment of papyrus."[88] His choice for a separation spell (*diakopos*) is introduced with the words "perhaps this is what you need," suggesting prior

86 Despite the coarse hand of some of the texts on the tablets, I see no reason to consider *all* of these texts as part of scribal education. T.Kellis II Copt. 1 has a pen exercise on the back. The glossaries had an educational function and one section of T.Kellis II Copt. 2 contains sections written in a coarse hand. Gardner, *KLT1*, 9, 13; E.A. Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law in the Roman World: Tabulae in Roman Belief and Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2004), 91–2 treats recitation from tablets as powerful symbolic action.

87 K. Haines-Eitzen, "The Social History of Early Christian Scribes," in *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research*, ed. B.D. Ehrman and M.W. Holmes (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 484–5; W.A. Johnson, *Readers and Reading Culture in the High Roman Empire: A Study of Elite Communities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 179–92; N. Denzey Lewis and J.A. Blount, "Rethinking the Origins of the Nag Hammadi Codices," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 133, no. 2 (2014): 416–19; Frankfurter, *Christianizing Egypt*, 184–232. K. Haines-Eitzen, *Guardians of Letters: Literacy, Power, and the Transmitters of Early Christian Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 83–96. The Kellis documents reflect a similar type of private scribal networks. C. Kotsifou, "Books and Book Production in the Monastic Communities of Byzantine Egypt," in *The Early Christian Book*, ed. W.E. Klingshirn and L. Safran (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 48–66; A. Luijendijk, "A New Testament Papyrus and Its Owner: P.Oxy. II 209/P10, an Early Christian School Exercise from the Archive of Leonides," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 129, no. 3 (2010): 584.

88 ϫⲉ ⲉⲣⲉ ⲡⲕⲉⲟⲩⲉ ⲥⲏϩ ⲁⲩ[ⲕⲟ]ⲩⲓ ⲛ̄ⲗⲉⲕⲙⲉ ⲛ̄ⲭⲁⲣⲧⲏⲥ P.Kellis V Copt. 35.30–31.

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correspondence about the spell's purpose.[89] In return for this particular spell, Ouales asks Psais to copy "the tetrads" (ⲛⲓⲧⲉⲧⲣⲁⲥ, either a spell or a set of four papyrus bifolios) quickly. Specifically, he urges: "Do not make it in big script, for they say that the papyrus has run out. Yet, it [the ⲧⲉⲧⲣⲁⲥ?] is a useful text, and if you do write them, I for my part will find your recompense."[90] The use of the plural implies that both scribes not only exchanged ritual texts among themselves, but worked for a third party. The final instruction to send the documents via "a blessed one" (ⲉϥⲥⲙⲁⲙⲁⲧ) may indicate that Ouales and Psais were catechumens with scribal training.

The earlier mentioned letter of Pekos (P.Kellis VII Copt. 120) offers another opportunity to examine the identity of the individuals involved in the scribal network. It locates a text called the *Gospel* at father Pabo's place. Prosopographical connections suggest that this "father Pabo" was a Manichaean elect, maybe even the presbyter Pebo addressed in the Teacher's letter (P.Kellis VII Copt. 61). If this is the case, it would corroborate with the authoritative position of "brother Pebo" in P.Kellis VII Copt. 111 in relation to the transportation of ten *tetrads* to Hibis. In the postscript to this letter, Olbinos asks Psais and Pebo to "take on this burden and do these things for me," invoking the religious use of the phrase "burden" from one of the other letters.[91] Father Pebo may have been an elect who kept the *Gospel* at home and interacted with Olbinos in a hierarchical relationship that resembled Ouales's interaction with an unnamed third party.[92] The two fragmentary letters with explicit Manichaean phrases (P.Kellis V Copt. 33 and 34, both found in House 3) could be cited to

89 P.Kellis V Copt. 35.14. On similar spells, see Mirecki, Gardner, and Alcock, "Magical Spell, Manichaean Letter," 23–27. There is no reason to assume Psais had sent a spell to Ouales previously, *contra* E.O.D. Love, *Code-Switching with the Gods: The Bilingual (Old Coptic-Greek) Spells of PGM IV (P. Bibliothèque Nationale Supplément Grec. 574) and Their Linguistic, Religious, and Socio-Cultural Context in Late Roman Egypt* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), 173.

90 ⲙ̄ⲡⲱⲣ ⲁϊⲉⲧϥ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁϭ ⲛ̄ⲥϩⲉϊ ϫⲉ ⲡⲁϫⲉⲩ ϫⲉ ⲁ ⲛⲭⲁⲣⲧⲏⲥ ⲟⲩⲱ ⲁⲗⲗⲁ ⲟⲩⲥϩⲉⲓ ⲉϥⲣϣⲉⲩ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲉⲕⲥⲁϩⲟⲩ ϯⲛⲁϭⲛ̄ ⲡⲕϣⲓⲃⲉ ϩⲱⲧ P.Kellis V Copt. 35.44–46 (modified translation). The editors offer as alternative: "Do not make it a long letter, because they say that the papyrus has run out; but (just) a useful letter." Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 228. Other complains about the availability of papyrus are included in P.Kellis VII Copt. 78 and 79, while P.Kellis V Copt. 39 refers to writing letters on scraps of papyrus.

91 In P.Kellis VII Copt. 73, "burden" carries a strong religious connotation. Teigen, *The Manichaean Church in Kellis*, 268.

92 "Tetrads" are discussed in both P.Kellis VII Copt. 111 and P.Kellis V Copt. 35. Unfortunately, it is difficult to establish whether it refers to a specific spell (in the latter letter) of a codex with four quires (in the first instance). Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 228. The identification of the various Pebo's is fragile, as P.Kellis VII Copt. 111 and 120 both mention a Pebo and a Pabo, without making clear if they are referring to the same individual.

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support a reconstruction in which the elect ordered books to be written.[93] Unfortunately, prosopographical connections with the Teacher's letter are not strong enough to state with certainty that the elect were directly involved in book writing.

The Kellis letters, therefore, mainly attest to the central role of catechumens in the scribal network. Makarios and Matthaios had access to a number of books; other titles had to be sent over for Matthaios to work on. One of the books had to be sent by mother Kouria (frequently spelled Kyria), an aunt who frequently interacted with Makarios's family. She most likely had the great (*Book of*) *Epistles* at home, suggesting that even female catechumens had access to Manichaean books.[94] Outspoken distress and conflict is visible in Makarios's interaction with Kyria regarding a book that was taken from them.[95] Makarios accuses her of misbehavior:

> You have reached this place to make apparent some ungodliness and inhumanity; while you know I did not copy it with any display! Now first: so that he (or 'it' the books?) would be saved from the hands of them pursuing him (it?). Second: because of the fire that burns in my heart on account of the book which they took, so that he might write it …[96]

To what extent this passage relates to the brother's son who is under persecution in Egypt, as we learn further on in the letter, or to Matthaios's things that have been taken from him (P.Kellis v Copt. 20.40–42) is unclear. Since the copying of a book is at the heart of the conflict, this passage corroborates that Kyria and Makarios were involved in the production of Manichaean

93 In P.Kellis v Copt. 33, a plural "us" is used for the writers. They ask whether the "little one" (ⲡⲕⲟⲩⲓ̈) has completed copying the *Gospel*. In P.Kellis v Copt. 34, the author employs extensive Manichaean phrases and asks when the recipient's son will be finished writing the book.

94 Franzmann, "The Manichaean Women in the Greek and Coptic Letters from Kellis," suggests that perhaps Kouria supported the child throughout his training.

95 The association between a cushion and a book in Makarios's letters is problematic. The editors reported their hesitation to translate "the dyed cushion for the book," (ⲡϣⲁⲧ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ⲛ̄ϫⲏϭⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡϫⲱⲙⲉ P.Kellis v Copt. 21.24), even though earlier Makarios had urged Maria to send it together, "also the cushion, and the book about which I sent to you, saying: 'send it to me.'" (ⲡⲕⲉϣⲁⲧ ⲙ̣[ⲛ] ⲡ̣ϫⲱⲙⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲓ̈ⲧⲛⲛⲁⲩ ⲛⲉ ⲉⲧⲃⲏⲧϥ ϫⲉ ⲧⲛⲛ̣[ⲁ]ⲩϥ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ P.Kellis v Copt. 20.35).

96 ϩⲁⲡⲱϩ ϣⲁ ⲡⲓ[ⲙ]ⲁ̣ ⲁⲧⲣⲉⲟⲩⲱⲛϩ ⲟⲩⲙⲛ̄ⲧ̣[ⲁ]ⲧⲛ̣ⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲧⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲉⲧⲉⲥⲁⲩⲛⲉ ϫⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲓ̈ⲥϩⲉⲓ̈ ⲛⲥⲱϥ ⲉⲛ ϩⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲃⲗⲁⲗⲉ ⲧⲟⲩⲓⲉ̣ⲙⲉⲛ ϫⲉϥ ⲛⲁⲛⲟⲩϩⲙⲉ ⲁⲛϭⲓϫ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲧⲡⲏⲧ ⲛ̄ⲥⲱ̣ϥ ⲧⲙⲁϩⲥⲛ̄ⲧ̣ⲉ̣ ⲉⲧ̣ⲃⲉ ⲧⲥⲉⲧⲉ ⲉⲧϫⲉ̣ⲣⲟ ϩⲙ̄ ⲡⲁϩⲏⲧ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲡϫⲱⲙⲉ ⲉ[ⲧⲁⲩ]ϥⲓ̣ⲧϥ ϫ[ⲉ]ϥⲁⲥ̣ⲁϩϥ P.Kellis v Copt. 22.62–66.

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books. In Pekos's letter, the book of *Acts* is in Lamon's possession. His identity is difficult to establish, since many letters include variants of this name. He may have been the Lamon known to Makarios and Pamour III, or even one of the Philammon's with whom they worked frequently.[97] Regardless of the exact identification, he was no outsider, but rather one of the village catechumens. At least ten catechumens known by name engaged with scribal activity. It seems unlikely that all participants in this network would have been able to make a living out of scribal work. Makarios and Psais III are known to have been actively involved in textile trade, and were therefore not paid as scribes, while Matthaios and Ouales were probably paid for their scribal services.

Religious Knowledge Differentiation

The identification of several Manichaean catechumens in the scribal network of Kellis is related to the question raised earlier regarding religious knowledge differentiation and secrecy. In fact, Claudia Leurini argues that Matthaios and other young Manichaean catechumens from Kellis were only allowed to copy Manichaean books because they were trained as elect in some sort of "domestic pre-noviciate."[98] As a norm, she states, books and writing were strictly connected with the elect. A strong indication in favor of the idea that knowledge was differentiated between elect and catechumens is found in Secundinus's accusation that Augustine "never knew the secret, hidden teachings," which were preached during separate gatherings for the elect.[99] Gardner and Lieu invoke this idea to explain the relatively low frequency of cosmological details in the Kellis papyri, and argue that Manichaean knowledge was "carefully graded and tailored to the needs of its audience."[100] Without delving too deeply

97 Lamon is greeted together with mother Tapshai by Pamour III (P.Kellis VII Copt. 65.47) and by Makarios (who calls him "Lamou," P.Kellis V Copt. 19.75, and 24.51). Another Philammon is greeted in all three letters.

98 Leurini, *Hymns in Honour of the Hierarchy*, 25.

99 The letter from Secundinus to Augustine (*Epistula ad Augustinum*, CSEL 25/2 p. 895.17–19), in which the former coreligionist accused Augustine of never being a true Manichaean. Augustine himself however does not refer to concealed knowledge as differentiating between elect and catechumens. J.D. BeDuhn, *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma, Volume 2: Making a "Catholic" Self, 388–401 C.E.* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 312. In my understanding of the letter of Secundinus, the author attributes Augustine's misunderstanding to his African ethnic background. See translation in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 37, where they also point to the Africanness of Rome's arch-enemy Hannibal. J.K. Coyle, "Saint Augustine's Manichaean Legacy," in *Manichaeism and Its Legacy* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 318.

100 Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 9, they state: "for the lay faithful in the Roman Empire it was a kind of superior Christianity, and the metaphysical details that attract the attention of scholars (and the higher echelons of the elect) had little profile. In the personal letters

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into polemical accusations of secrecy and concealment, as frequently uttered by Christian heresiologists, one wonders whether catechumens worked on canonical Manichaean books or had only limited access to them.[101] The preceding analysis of the Kellis letters tends to support the former interpretation, although a strict minimalist approach would have to emphasize the inconclusive nature of book titles like *Acts* and *Gospel*. The wider Manichaean traditions, as we will see, support this interpretation and offer little to substantiate Secundinus's report of secret teachings for the elect alone.

The Coptic *Sermon on the Great War* includes catechumens in its depiction of the eschatological future of a textual community gathered around Manichaean scripture and its reader(s).[102] In this postwar future, the followers of Mani will "once again recover their memory and study in the books of the wisdom."[103] New generations of catechumens will arise and find the "writings written and they will find the books adorned."[104] Their communal life will be filled with psalm singing and their houses "will be like schools."[105] Even the little girls

of the believers at Kellis there appears to be scarce knowledge or interest in the many gods and demons, and the intricacies of cosmology." Cf. H. Chadwick, "The Attractions of Mani," in *Pleroma: salus carnis: homenaje a Antonio Orbe S.J.*, ed. E. Romero-Pose (Santiago de Compostela: Publicaciones Compostellanum, 1990), 217 and 221.

101 On secrecy and Manichaeans, see G.G. Stroumsa, "Monachisme et marranisme chez les manichéens d'Egypte," *Numen* 29, no. 2 (1982): 184–201; I. Colditz, "Manichäische Parabeln – didaktische Literatur für Hörer?," in *Zur lichten Heimat: Studien zu Manichäismus, Iranistik und Zentralasienkunde im Gedenken an Werner Sundermann*, ed. Team Turfanforschung (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2017), 85–102; Matsangou, "Real and Imagined Manichaeans," 159–70. On accusations of secrecy and concealment, see Pedersen, *Demonstrative Proof*, 204. This heresiological strategy is discussed in Berzon, *Classifying Christians*, 177.

102 Iricinschi, "Manichaean Writings and Religious Propaganda," 270 with references to *Homilies* 25.1–19 and 30.27–31.7. "Readers" in early Christian communities belonged to the minor orders and were responsible for public reading of the Bible. D. Nässelqvist, *Public Reading in Early Christianity: Lectors, Manuscripts, and Sound in the Oral Delivery of John 1–4* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 63–118. The status of the reader changed into an important moral role in the third century. Early Christian lectors became church officials, teachers, chosen from the confessors, instead of simply literate enslaved persons. Wipszycka, "Les ordres mineurs," 181–215. Paradoxically, literacy was not always a requirement for this ecclesiastical office. M. Choat and R. Yuen-Collingridge, "A Church with No Books and a Reader Who Cannot Write: The Strange Case of P.Oxy. 33.2673," *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 46 (2009): 109–38.

103 ⲛ̄ⲥⲉⲛⲁⲩϩⲟⲩ ⲁⲡⲟⲩⲣ̄ⲡⲙⲉⲩⲉ ⲛ̄ⲕⲉⲥ[ⲁⲡ ⲛ̄]ⲥⲉⲙⲉⲗⲉⲧⲁ ϩⲛ̄ⲛ̄ϫⲙⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲥⲟⲫⲓⲁ Hom. 23.1–2.

104 ⲥⲉⲛⲁⲉⲓ ⲛ̄ⲥⲉϭⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ⲅⲣⲁⲫⲁⲩⲉ ⲉⲩⲥⲏ[ϩ ⲛⲥ]ⲉ̣ϭⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ϫⲙⲉ ⲉⲩⲕⲟⲥⲙⲉ Hom. 28.10–11 (modified translation).

105 ⲥⲉⲛⲁⲣ̄ⲑⲉ [ⲛ̄ⲛⲓ]ⲁⲛⲥⲏⲃ̣ ⲛ̄ⲥⲃⲱ Hom. 30.31–32.

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will be found "being taught to write and singing psalms and reading."[106] The sermon's ideal picture, thus, corresponds to the situation in Kellis, where the Teacher taught Piene to read (and write?) Latin and "made him read in every church."[107] In Eastern Manichaean texts, catechumens could claim religious merit by their scribal or financial involvement in book writing. In the extant sections of the *Book of Giants*, a "Hearer that copies a book" is compared to a sick man who gave his life (?) for the sake of the community.[108] Similarly, in one of the colophons of a Turkic Manichaean text, a Hearer expresses his desire to be remembered for reciting and copying texts.[109] Scribal activity was praiseworthy because in the Manichaean perception, the illness of ignorance was eased when these texts were copied, countering the decline of the world. As Andrea Piras states, "[W]riting and copying is a good therapy to cure the individual and the community"; it works as a medicine through which "the human condition of illness is counteracted by the act of writing (with zeal, accuracy, precision)."[110] Scribes and donors were, therefore, praised. Their names were included at the end of some of the Parthian and Middle Persian Manichaean hymns, where they appear without further introduction or frame.[111] In several hymns, the intended space at the end was left blank, flanked by punctuation marks, ready to be filled in with a donor's name. Since these names were not restricted to catechumens, but included names of elect, these passages may

106 ⲉ[ⲩϫⲓ]ⲥⲃⲱ ⲁⲥϩ̣ⲉ̣ⲓ̣̈ ⲉⲩⲣ̄ⲯⲁⲗⲉ ⲉⲩⲱϣ Hom. 31.7. Iricinschi, "Hebrew Scriptures and Persian Books," 158–59.

107 ⲉϥⲧⲣⲉϥⲱ̣ϣ ⲕⲁⲧ̣ⲁ̣ ⲉ̣ⲕ̣ⲕ̣ⲗ̣ⲏ̣ⲥ̣ⲓⲁ P.Kellis V Copt. 25.46 (modified translation).

108 The passage is translated by Henning as "The Hearer that copies a book, is like unto a sick man that gave his … to a … man." W. Henning, "The Book of the Giants," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 11, no. 1 (1943): 59 lines 230–33. In this paragraph, I follow the interpretation and reading of A. Piras, "The Writing Hearer: A Suggested Restoration of M 101d," in *Zur lichten Heimat: Studien zu Manichäismus, Iranistik und Zentralasienkunde im Gedenken an Werner Sundermann*, ed. Team Turfanforschung (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2017), 525–34.

109 Cited and translated in Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road*, 375.

110 Piras, "The Writing Hearer," 530. I cannot agree with Claudia Leurini that Hearers were banned from copying texts. Her reading of this passage equates copying a book with being sick, not taking into account the entire parable. Leurini, *The Manichaean Church*, 82–85, in particular the last page.

111 Colditz, "On the Names of 'Donors'," 56–67. The majority of the names appears in hymns, with a few exceptions in prose texts or texts whose character cannot be determined. Earlier work by Sundermann includes W. Sundermann, "Namen von Göttern, Dämonen und Menschen in iranischen Versionen des manichäischen Mythos," *Altorientalische Forschungen* 6 (1979): 95–133; W. Sundermann, "Iranische Personennamen der Manichäer," *Die Sprache* 36, no. 2 (1994): 244–70.

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have been used to commemorate all those involved in the scribal process: elect and catechumen.[112]

The participation of catechumens as scribes has to be seen within the context of the notion of dual authorship in Manichaean texts. Since Mani was considered the central authority, all other authors were considered merely transmitters of Mani's original and final revelation.[113] Sometimes this meant that the author was anonymous, as in the Kellis letter of the Teacher, who is only known through his title (P.Kellis VII Copt. 61).[114] The introduction to the *Kephalaia* describes Mani's books as "the measure of all wisdom. Everything that has occurred, and that will occur, is written in them."[115] Elsewhere, Mani claims superiority over previous churches, depicting the textual transmission process as adulterated: "[M]y brethren who came prior to me: they did not write their wisdom in books the way that I, I have written it."[116] Paradoxically, the *Kephalaia* was compiled by Mani's disciples, who claimed to collect pieces of Mani's wisdom. Their writing had to be in line with Mani's three great lessons, as the introduction to the *Kephalaia* explains: "[E]very writer, if he reveals these three great lessons: that one is the writer of truth. Also, every teacher, if he gives instruction and proclaims these three lessons, is the teacher of truth."[117] The "three great lessons" represent the three times and the two principles, which provided the framework for Manichaean authorship to develop after Mani.[118] The text is even more explicit about the tension between Mani's own authorship and ongoing Manichaean scribal activity:

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112 Colditz rightly points to the paradox of high-ranking elect donating money for the purpose of book-writing, while they were supposed to live in voluntary poverty. The association with funerary rituals is made on the basis of a name with the additional phrase "should be remembered." Colditz, "On the Names of 'Donors'," 62–5, citation from page 64.

113 Baker-Brian, *Study of Augustine's Contra Adimantum*, 148–59.

114 In other instances, the authors are explicitly named as witnesses to Mani's revelation (e.g. Koustaios the disciple in the CMC). Pedersen, *Studies*, 399–400.

115 .. ⲛⲧⲁⲩ ⲛⲉ ⲡϣ̣ⲓ̣ ⲛ̣ⲧ̣ⲥⲟⲫⲓⲁ ⲧⲏⲣⲥ ϩⲱⲃ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲉⲁϥ̣ϣ̣[ⲱⲡⲉ] ⲙ̣ⲛ̄ ⲡ[ⲉ]ⲧⲛⲁϣ̣[ⲱⲡ]ⲉ ϥⲥⲏϩ ⲛ̄ϩⲏⲧⲟⲩ 1 Keph. 5.27–28.

116 ⲛⲁⲥⲛⲏⲩ ⲉⲧⲁⲩⲉⲓ ⲛ̄ϣⲁⲣⲡ ⲁⲣⲁⲓ̈ ⲙ̄[ⲡⲟⲩⲥϩⲉⲓ̈] ⲧⲟⲩⲥⲟⲫⲓⲁ ⲁⲛϫⲙⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧϩⲉ ⲁⲛⲁⲕ ⲉⲧⲁⲓ̈ⲥ̣ⲁϩⲥ̣ 1 Keph. 151 371.26–28.

117 ⲅ̣ⲣⲁ̣[ⲫⲉⲩⲥ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲉϥϭⲱ]ⲗ̣ⲡ ⲁⲃ[ⲁ]ⲗ ϩⲁ ⲡⲓϣⲁⲙⲧ̄ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁϭ ⲛⲥⲉϫⲉ ⲡⲉⲧⲙⲙⲉ[ⲩ ⲡⲉ …….. ⲥ]ⲁϩ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲁⲛ ⲉϥϯⲥⲃⲱ ⲉϥⲧⲁϣⲉⲁⲓ̈ϣ ϩⲁ ⲡ̣ⲓ̣ϣ̣[ⲁⲙⲧ̄ ⲛ̄ⲥⲉϫⲉ ⲡⲉ] ⲡ̣ⲥⲁϩ ⲙ̄ⲙⲏⲉ 1 Keph. 5.29–33 (the reconstructed text is not given in Böhlig/Polotsky, nor in Gardner's translation).

118 Compare how the Chinese *Compendium* includes a category of teachings attributed to Mani, but is written by his disciples. This "tradition," according to Haloun and Henning, is "as genuine and false as the Muslimic 'tradition': it may reflect the prophet's views with perfect accuracy, or it may distort his meaning completely." G. Haloun and W. Henning, "The Compendium of the Doctrines and Styles of the Teaching of Mani, the Buddha of Light," *Asia Major, Third Series* 3 (1952): 211.

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> To you, that the wisdom and the interpretation ……. From time to time, which I did not write … and you write after me, so that … it leads you not astray! For you yourselves know the great wisdom I have uttered in city after city, in each land separately. What I have written in books, no human mouth will suffice to write. Nevertheless, according to your capacity, and even as you may find strength; remember! And write a little something from the great wisdom that you have heard from me. When you write down and are amazed by them … enlighten greatly; and they shall give benefit and make free … of the truth.[119]

At various other places in the *Kephalaia* books, Manichaeans are called upon to put into writing what Mani had not written himself. At the end of the Dublin *Kephalaia*, a fragmentary passage reads: "[T]hings which I have not written" and "you shall write it down."[120] Elsewhere, the collection's compiler justifies his work with the following words:

> This commandment which He has given …. So I have written down these *Kephalaia* … and the interpretations that the Apostle uttered occasionally, at the particular places in the particular countries, so that … and it be known … in His Church. Now, then, His … do not let them … and say … (etc., longer lacuna) … what I have heard … what I have written in … this book (?)….[121]

In this way, the entire double volume of the *Kephalaia* starts and ends with the call to write down Mani's wisdom.[122] The result was an ideology of Manichaean

119 ⲁⲧⲟⲧⲧⲏⲛⲉ ϫⲉ ⲧⲥⲟⲫⲓⲁ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲑⲉ̣[ⲣⲙⲏⲛⲓⲁ?…… ⲕⲁⲧⲁ] ⲟⲩⲁïϣ ⲟⲩⲁïϣ ⲉⲧⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲓⲥⲁϩⲥ̄.. [……….]. ⲛⲧⲉⲧⲛⲥⲁϩⲥ̄ ⲙⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲥⲱⲓ ϫⲉⲕⲁⲥ̣..[…..] ⲛⲉⲥⲣⲡⲗⲁⲛⲏ ⲛⲧⲟⲧⲧⲏⲛⲉ ⲉⲡⲉⲓⲇⲏ̣ ⲧ̣ⲉ̣ⲧ̣ⲛ̣ⲥ̣ⲁ̣[ⲩⲛⲉ?] ϩⲱⲧⲧⲏⲛⲉ ϫⲉ ⲧⲥⲟⲫⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲛⲁϣⲱⲥ ⲉⲧ[ⲁïⲧⲉⲟⲩⲁⲥ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ] ⲡⲟⲗⲓⲥ ⲡⲟⲗⲓⲥ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲭⲱⲣⲁ ⲭⲱⲣⲁ ⲭⲱⲣⲓⲥ ⲡⲉⲧ[ⲁïⲥⲁϩϥ] ⲁϫⲱⲙⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲧ̣ⲁ̣ⲡⲣⲟ ⲛ̄ⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲛⲁⲣⲱϣⲉ ⲁⲥⲁϩ[ϥ] ⲁⲗⲗⲁ ⲛⲧⲱⲧⲛ̄ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲡⲉⲧⲛϫⲓⲛ ⲙⲛ ⲧϩⲉ ⲉⲧⲉⲧⲛ[ⲛ]ⲁϭ [ⲛ]ϭⲁⲙ ⲁⲣⲓⲡⲙⲉⲩⲉ ⲛⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲥϩⲉï ⲟⲩⲕⲟⲩï ⲛⲗⲁⲩⲉ ϩ̣ⲛ [ⲧⲥⲟ]ⲫⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲛⲁϣⲱⲥ ⲉⲧⲁⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲥⲁⲧⲙⲉⲥ ⲛⲧⲟⲟⲧ̣ ⲉ[ϣⲁⲛⲧⲉ] ⲧⲛ̄ⲥⲁϩⲟⲩ ⲛ[ⲧⲉⲧⲛ]ⲣ̄ϣⲡⲏⲣⲉ ⲛϩⲏⲧⲟⲩ[..]…. ⲉ … ⲟⲩⲁïⲛⲉ ⲧⲟⲛⲱ ⲛⲥⲉϯϩⲏⲩ ⲛⲥⲉⲣ̣̄ⲣⲙ̄ϩⲉ̣….. ⲛⲧⲉ ⲧⲙⲏⲉ 1 Keph. 8.33–9.10 (his brackets).

120 2 Keph. Facsimile 325 and 326 (unpublished). Cited and translated in W.P. Funk, "The Reconstruction of the Manichaean Kephalaia," in *Emerging from Darkness: Studies in the Recovery of Manichaean Sources*, ed. J.D. BeDuhn and P.A. Mirecki (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 153. Funk located the passage on page 429.12 and 430.4, but the new reconstruction by Gardner, BeDuhn and Dilley has placed these pages elsewhere.

121 2 Keph. 447.2–7, unpublished, with Coptic text transcribed and translated in Funk, "The Reconstruction of the Manichaean Kephalaia," 153–4.

122 Keith Hopkins already stated that the missionary argument stressing Mani's authorship cannot be accepted in full. In fact, to do so with be a historian's "sin." K. Hopkins, *A World*

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authorship in which Mani was the intellectual author, and others physically wrote his message down (e.g. 2 Keph. 333).[123]

As a final interpretative step, I would like to suggest that not all Manichaean scribal activity was automatically connected to missionary activity. Many of the Kellis texts derived from a wider scribal network, in which identifiable Manichaean scribes also copied spells and engaged with apocryphal Christian traditions. Matthaios copied Manichaean psalms as a scribal exercise, and some of his copies may have ended up on the cleaned boards of wooden codices either because they were internally used, or because they were distributed to other Manichaeans in the Nile valley. The latter seems to have been the reason for his father's admonition to practice daily, as he adds, "because I need you to write books here."[124] Apart from being used to distribute Mani's books throughout Egypt, scribal activity served a ritual purpose. It was widely regarded as a type of personal ascetic practice, aimed at the transformation of the self. The Chinese *Traité* reports that zealous Manichaeans would chant hymns in their rituals, "transcribe what they have chanted, and then repeat it in their thoughts; in this way there is never a moment wasted."[125] Instead of being primarily aimed at conveying information, this approach to writing provided for what BeDuhn calls the "private, individualized spiritual development," which brought the "disjointed and conflicted thought of the individual" into alignment with "true Manichaean selfhood by a process of entextualising the self."[126] The Kellis texts never indicate missionary activity, which leaves a variety of reasons for the central role of book writing within this network.

Conclusions

Kellis was a book lovers' place. Books were requested in the personal letters; scribes were commissioned, and wooden boards were inscribed with psalms, prayers, and scribal exercises. Most book titles mentioned in the letters are

Full of Gods: Pagans, Jews and Christians in the Roman Empire (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999), 269–70.

123 A similar dual attitude toward authorship is visible in the references to Mani's picture book. Some passages claim that Mani painted all the images himself, but others make clear that he was only the intellectual author. Gulácsi, *Mani's Pictures*, 53.

124 ϫⲉ ϯⲣ̄ⲭⲣ̣ⲓ̣[ⲁ ⲙⲙ]ⲁⲕ ⲁⲥϩ̄ ϩⲛ̄ϫⲱⲙⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲓⲙⲁ P.Kellis V Copt. 19.18.

125 *Traité*, XXIX 260–263, translation in Lieu and Mikkelsen, *Tractatus Manichaicus Sinicus*, 69. In a Middle Persian parable, the gifts of a rich man to the king are compared to, and identified with, sacred books. M47, translation in Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road*, 190. Discussed in Colditz, "On the Names of 'Donors'," 59.

126 BeDuhn, "The Domestic Setting," 269 and 270; Cf. Krueger, *Writing and Holiness*.

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difficult to identify, but it is possible to discern between spells, biblical books, Christian apocrypha, classical literature, and Manichaean texts when the book titles are examined in combination with the manuscripts found on-site. The inhabitants of Houses 1–3 read widely, and the scribes within this network did not exclusively work on Manichaean books. As elsewhere, the reading and copying of Manichaean texts did not coincide with a single textual community.[127] Evidence for the presence of a school teacher in House 2, where a local carpenter also produced the wooden boards, along with the material and papyrological remains of a school in the main temple, provide the background for Makarios's admonition to his son Matthaios. It is clear that Matthaios worked alongside family members and acquaintances, but it remains uncertain if the elect ordered these books to be copied (as may have been the case in Ouales's letter), or were otherwise involved in the circulation and copying of Manichaean texts. The scribal network organized around these instances of Manichaeanness had a very limited scope. Not all those affiliated with the Manichaean families of Kellis were involved in scribal activity. The Kellis papyri, therefore, illustrate how a *scribal network group style* functioned, and provide an example separate from the purported textual communities found in hagiographical stories.

The occasional references to book titles reveal that Matthaios worked on Manichaean psalms, prayers, Mani's *Epistles*, the book of *Acts*, and probably even the *Living Gospel* – one of Mani's lost books – alongside texts derived from the broader Christian tradition. Some of Mani's *Epistles* have been identified on fragments of a papyrus leaf, which strengthens this interpretation of Matthaios's scribal activity. He had access to Manichaean books just like other catechumens (and even his aunt Kyria), and played an active role in their reproduction. This shows that Manichaeans in Kellis were not systematically excluded from higher forms of esoteric knowledge. Some of them must have been very knowledgeable about Manichaean doctrine, even though the cosmological traditions feature infrequently in the personal letters.

The use of Syriac writing in Kellis is another indication of transregional connections, and the awareness of the Manichaean tradition and history outside the Egyptian-Roman world. It was not an instance of Syrian missionaries proselytizing in a new area and translating their work into Coptic, but rather of Coptic scribes extending their focus from Greek and Coptic to Syriac. The

127 This argument is made for textual communities in the later Roman Empire, but also for the readership of Mani's books specifically. Rüpke, *Pantheon*, 334. Lim has shown that non-Manichaean Christians also read Mani's *Thesaurus* as a work of religious and philosophical wisdom. Lim, "Unity and Diversity," 244–45.

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tentative evidence for the use of Syriac during church gatherings is, moreover, highly remarkable. If Ision indeed read Syriac texts aloud during communal gatherings, these instances would have stood out as an extraordinary group-specific practice beyond anything performed or experienced by other fourth-century Egyptians.

Despite the abundance of textual and material insights, we are left to speculate about the aim of copying and circulating books. Was it meant for missionary activity, or simply for the libraries of Manichaean communities in the Oasis and the Nile valley? In absence of any solid evidence that the scribal activity had missionary purposes, we may infer alternative explanations from material aspects of the documents. The small size of some of the wooden boards, the presence of writing exercises and word lists, and the manuscripts' composition in codices point to localized use in communal gatherings, as well as in individual spiritual and educational exercises. Some of these texts may have belonged to Manichaean rituals focused on self-improvement, by which listeners, readers, and writers allowed their minds to be shaped by the transempirical power of the books.[128] The marked Manichaeanness of such moments is, however, invisible in the personal letters, where Mani's powerful "antidotes" are listed alongside non-Manichaean literature.

128 Iricinschi, "Hebrew Scriptures and Persian Books," 175.

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CONCLUSION

Untidy History: Manichaeanness in Everyday Life

> A second-century observer might have been unlikely to pick out the rise of differentiated groups as *the* religious innovation of his or her age.
>
> GREG WOOLF[1]

Introduction

Looking for Manichaean lives in the day-to-day papyri from Kellis showcases the unruly nature of religion in everyday life. The practices of Manichaean individuals and families never entirely correspond with the prescriptive reality of theological and cosmological system builders found in texts. Everyday life is more diverse, ambiguous, and creative than the world imagined in religious texts. In other words, religion beyond representations of light and darkness is a world in many shades of grey. Thousands of papyrus fragments, wooden boards, and ostraca read within their archaeological context further reveal the fundamentally local and untidy nature of daily religion. The excavations at Ismant-el Kharab provide unprecedented insights into the social and economic lives of fourth-century families on the fringes of the Roman Empire. Many of these individuals and families engaged with Manichaean texts and practices, and interacted with associated religious specialists. Some of their children traveled with Manichaean elect throughout Egypt, while others were trained in scribal practice, copying Manichaean books alongside other various types of religious literature. Additional family members and acquaintances prayed Manichaean prayers while facing the sun or the moon, and sung psalms and hymns about Mani and the fate of the soul after death. Some of them expressed this religious involvement in their choice of words, utilizing Manichaean self-designators

1 Woolf, "Empires, Diasporas and the Emergence of Religions," 34 (his italics). The chapter title alludes to A.E. Franklin, "Untidy History: Reassessing Communal Boundaries in Light of the Cairo Geniza Documents," in *Age of Transition: Byzantine Culture in the Islamic World*, ed. H.C. Evans (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2015), 54–69.

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and expressions in personal letters. A number of Kellites were stirred to give alms to Manichaean elect and catechumens.

At the same time, individuals in these letters interacted with neighbors who did not necessarily share a Manichaean affiliation and practice. They called upon local and regional Roman elites, used a Christian scribe when necessary, ordered amulets and horoscopes, buried their beloved without tangible indication of a distinct group identity, and mostly addressed each other using unmarked kinship repertoire. Even the instances of recognizable *Manichaeanness* – moments of group solidarity and salience – took place within a broader village context, which included a wide array of social interactions, gifts, and economic exchanges. Whereas religious situations and groups take a central stage in literary and historical texts, they are less visible in documentary sources. The role of Manichaeanness in the personal letters from Kellis is limited at best, often embedded in side references without additional information. This stands in contrast to the underlying assumptions of groupism, which tend to uncover one-dimensional religious individuals who are singularly devoted. Peter Brown espouses this reconstruction when he repeatedly describes the Manichaean "intense solidarity" and "spiritual friendship" as inherently attractive characteristics that bolstered a strong group identity.[2] Such strong religious interpretations are not without merit, but they tend to capture the high ideals of religious elites. The Manichaeism detected in the Kellis papyri is not only "lightly institutionalized," but also infrequently salient: it did not pervade everyday life in all aspects.[3]

Recognizing the fractured and multifaceted nature of Manichaeism as practiced at the village level requires one to move beyond modern reconstructions of Late Antiquity as the cradle of secondary religion (characterized by autonomous religious groups with universal claims). Typologies based on such binary abstractions tend to prioritize rhetorical and textual realities. They do not aid the close-up study of micro level engagement, the identification of a variety of individual choices, the intermittence of religious identifications, or the wider array of religious group styles and repertoires that could be called

2 Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, 159.

3 R.S. Bagnall, "Models and Evidence in the Study of Religion in Late Roman Egypt," in *From Temple to Church: Destruction and Renewal of Local Cultic Topography in Late Antiquity*, ed. J. Hahn, S. Emmel, and U. Gotter (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 36. In contrast, Teigen stresses the institutional aspects of the Manichaean church in Kellis, stating that "[w]hile our sources do not chiefly relate to Elect activities, the glimpses we *do* get suggest that they sought to reinforce ties to the local community while maintaining a wider church organization." Teigen, *The Manichaean Church in Kellis*, 290 (his italics).

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upon to bring structure to everyday experiences.[4] Thinking about everyday groupness and "untidy history" *on the ground* supplements academic classifications of locative-utopian and primary-secondary religion. Closer inspection of Manichaeanness in everyday life reveals details that challenge previous reconstructions of Manichaeans as a well-defined religious group (even characterized as "sectarian") that engaged in mission work, experienced persecution, and claimed a reified Christian identity in competition with other such groups. Without such ideas on the background, it becomes clear that a Manichaean affiliation in the Dakhleh Oasis was only occasionally salient and shaped some situations more than others.

When Did Manichaeism Matter?

Even though group-specific religious identification was unaccentuated for many ancient individuals in daily life, a Manichaean identification could also be highly salient. These situations entailed activating a Manichaean disposition in four basic categories of social action: *talking*, *choosing*, *performing*, and *consuming*. Pinpointing when it featured prominently – and when not – has led me to prioritize the local papyrological evidence over comparative transregional reconstructions. The Kellis papyri do not always represent a profound internalization of a Manichaean identity and associated group norms: it could arise as an occasional event *or* crystalize into a long-lasting affiliation.

Talking Manichaeanness means the discursive construction and maintenance of moments of identification with a Manichaean group. The authors of the Kellis letters framed situations as group-specific religious events with their choice of words, formulas, and self-designators. In doing so, they appropriated elements from Manichaean theology and cosmology, and used them to approach their addressees, as in "children of the living race" or "daughters of the Light Mind." Letter writers also employed a Manichaean repertoire as a politeness strategy, stressing a common bond in the introduction of the letter before moving on to more specific – and often mundane – considerations. Since the primary goal of most ancient letters was not to convey information, but rather to maintain existing social relations and foster new ones, these Manichaean designators and phrases served a rhetorical strategy of stressing

4 Late antique Egypt is not only defined by ascetic innovations like monasticism, Christological controversies, and fierce confrontations between bishops and heretics See the complaints in A. Papaconstantinou, "Egypt," in *The Oxford Handbook of Late Antiquity*, ed. S.F. Johnson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 197.

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commonality. Far more common are the unmarked alternatives, including the use of kinship terminology and simple designators related to the household and neighborhood.

Two situations stand out from this pattern: fundraising and singing. The elect's fundraising letters contain the most explicit Manichaean repertoire, through which the author framed the situation in a religious reality of frequent almsgiving for the sake of releasing the Living Soul. Framing the exchange relationship in light of the cosmological battle between Light and Darkness was necessary since most of the elect traveled in the Nile valley. They may have visited the oasis, but the distance between the two classes of Manichaeans had to be overcome primarily by travelers carrying letters. In absence of the elect's daily presence, catechumens may have gathered among themselves to sing psalms, pray, and listen to scripture readings. The details concerning the liturgy and the frequency of communal gatherings are sparse, but the extant psalm and prayer manuscripts point to communal gatherings in which a discrete Manichaean group identity and style were narrated in song, performed in bodily action, and reiterated in prayers and readings. Those who participated in these gatherings may have picked up a Manichaean repertoire and view of the world. After sixteen hundred years, it is difficult to determine which terminology was understood as Manichaean in-group language. A prayer formula addressing the "Father, the God of truth" did not directly mark a distinct religious position in the same way as the phrase "limb of the Light Mind," but it may have derived from socialization in the liturgy, from copying Mani's *Epistles*, or from exposure to the elect's letters. This formula would have been recognized by readers familiar with this repertoire, leading to the activation of group-specific dispositions. Other readers may have associated it with fourth-century Christian liturgy and literature, depending on their socialization and background knowledge. The usage of a specific variant of Coptic in the personal letters and liturgical documents seems to correlate with a sense of commonality and connection that included religious identifications, but the distinctions are too subtle for a direct identification with one group-specific tradition, as Greek continued to play a major role in liturgy and life.

Demarcated religious groups in Late Antiquity were not only a matter of talk. Imagined religious communities became real for people in their day-to-day life, sometimes directly influencing everyday choices. *Choosing Manichaeanness* was infrequently visible in the personal letters, albeit not entirely absent. Many features from the Manichaean ideology of gift giving are present in the Kellis papyri: the division between catechumens and elect is visible and there are clearly letters with requests for alms. It is therefore most probable that some inhabitants of Kellis donated food or other commodities

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for specifically Manichaean reasons. Since these interactions and transactions blended and intersected with other behavioral expectations, it is not easy to discern the motivation behind gifts. In the multilayered world of Kellis, religious almsgiving was not a presumed construct acted out in the domain of everyday life without conscious reflection; it was entangled in daily interactions between individuals. The interaction between various socializations and social roles also suggests that it is unlikely that the Manichaeans constituted an exclusive community. It is most likely that the Manichaeans in Kellis continued most of their interactions with their (non-Manichaean) family and neighbors on the basis of their shared village identification.

Choices surrounding death, burial, and commemoration illustrate the same duality of activated Manichaeanness on the one hand, and the absence of visible group-specific customs on the other. Manichaeans had elaborate ideas about what happened to the soul after death, just like many of their contemporaries in fourth- and fifth-century Egypt. Some of these Manichaean beliefs became ritualized in songs, such as the short Coptic *Seven stages hymn*, sung during a commemorative event in which Manichaeans supported the ascent of the soul through singing and almsgiving. A second ritualized event may have taken place at the deathbed, during the precious moment that the soul left the body. Matthaios's grief about the absence of elect and catechumens at the moment of departure indicates sky-high Manichaeanness. Unfortunately, the sources fail to tell us about local Manichaean burial practices. Even though connections between Manichaeans and the poverty of graves, the orientation of the body, and the absence of burial goods have been suggested, no indications of a distinctly Manichaean funerary tradition remain. Either the group-specific customs left no tangible trace, or the Manichaeans of the Dakhleh Oasis followed local burial customs with relatively poor treatment of the body and simple pit graves.

Manichaeanness was *performed* on various occasions: in regular communal gatherings, in the daily prayers, and in hospitality to the elect. Engaging in these activities meant seeing themselves – and others – in light of Manichaean notions about voluntary poverty, reciprocal obligations, and the salvation of Light. Manichaean psalms and prayers not only narrated the Manichaean cosmology, thus reiterating doctrine, but offered moments of emotional and bodily engagement with the ideas. The combination of bodily experience and singing, along with the perceived efficacy of acclamations and songs must have activated Manichaeanness and contributed to socializing the self within the narrative world of Manichaeism. The same holds true for the daily prayers. By prostrating themselves thirty times during three sets of daily prayers, catechumens acted on their self-identification as Manichaeans. There are, however,

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also reasons to question the regularity and uniformity of participation in communal gatherings. It is unclear how often these gatherings took place and how many people participated in them; let alone to what extent they understood the meaning of some of the cosmological texts. Since many family members spent time traveling in the Nile valley, they cannot have frequented gatherings in Kellis. Some of these trips took place in the retinue of the elect, such as Piene's journeys with the Teacher. As he was taught how to read in church, he may have been trained as one of the new elect. Matthaios's and Philammon's journeys with Apa Lysimachos appear to have been less religiously motivated. They may have traveled together, taken care of the elect, and shared in songs, meals, and confession, but they also conducted business at the various markets in the Nile valley. The recommendation letters from Oxyrhynchus show that local communities and households could support such traveling groups, but such hospitality is never explicitly addressed in the Kellis letters. This silence also hampers further investigation of the religious aim of traveling. Though hagiographical and polemical stories about missionary activity exist, there is no explicit trace of mission trips in the papyri.

This stretched out network of travelers and households is also visible in requests to circulate Manichaean books, which were to be sent along with other types of literature. The passages in the letters concerning scribal activity reveal that Manichaean catechumens in Kellis were involved in reproducing texts that belonged to the canon of books attributed to Mani (Mani's *Epistles*, the book of *Acts*, and perhaps the *Psalms and Prayers*, and the *Gospel*). Text copying involved intense moments of Manichaeanness – the scribe stepped into the Manichaean authorial tradition and participated in recounting Mani's wisdom. If these texts were read by ecclesiastical "readers" like Piene and Ision, they would have redefined time and space entirely (especially when read in Syriac), connecting the audience to the imagined Manichaean community and its roots in third-century Mesopotamia.

Finally, there is hardly any evidence for *consuming Manichaeanness*: there is no trace of specifically Manichaean art or architecture. Economic interactions seem to have crossed religious categories, and there is no trace of religious distinction in the material remains of consumption habits. The only instance when an expression of religious difference can be detected is in the local reading habits. Not only do we witness Manichaean books being circulated and copied; they are also found among the personal letters. Copies of Mani's *Epistles*, texts related to themes of the *Kephalaia*, and reused codices with Manichaean psalms and prayers were consumed – and probably produced – in Houses 1–3. The material characteristics of some of these codices reveal that they were used in liturgical and educational settings. The most remarkable

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discovery is a wooden board with a Greek version of the daily Manichaean prayers (also known in Middle Persian and Arabic versions). Along with the Manichaean psalms and the *Epistles*, this wooden board shows the influence of a group-specific religious tradition that stretched beyond the Egyptian context of its users. Nevertheless, the same readers may have read the Classical literature found in the same vicinities, such as the work of Homer and the orations of Isocrates. Other texts mentioned in letters or found on papyrus fragments are best described as biblical and apocryphal, including a compilation based on the *Acts of John*, fragments of two New Testament letters, and an invocation (?) resembling Sethian literature, as well as horoscopes and amulets. In some ways, then, the reading habits at Kellis resemble BeDuhn's characterization of Augustine:

> [Augustine] was a rhetorician, a teacher, a family man, and an amateur astrologer. His bookshelf was lined with volumes of Cicero, Seneca, Virgil, Aristotle, and pseudo-Pythagoras. He also read a little Mani, and took initiation as a Manichaean auditor.[5]

Just like Augustine, some of the Kellites read widely, included Manichaean books in a broader spectrum of learning, and circulated religious literature not regarded as group-specific. This leads to the question of how prominent their Manichaean identification was in relation to their other social roles, and whether all these situations coalesced into the type of differentiated groups that Greg Woolf, in the epigraph of this chapter, called "*the* religious innovation" of Late Antiquity.[6]

Modeling Late Antique Religion

It has been said that the most remarkable transformation – or innovation – in Late Antiquity was from a world in which religion was embedded within preexisting social formations to one in which competing religious groups became organized as discrete social units. For the Manichaeans of Kellis, religion was no longer coterminous with their village or ethnic identity; Manichaean practices constituted a marked choice against the long-held village tradition of venerating Tutu. On the other hand, their various Manichaean practices did not always crystalize into a coherent and well-demarcated religious group with

5 BeDuhn, *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma 1*, 287.
6 Woolf, "Empires, Diasporas and the Emergence of Religions," 34 (his italics).

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explicit labels for insiders and outsiders. Scholarly classification of these individuals as "Manichaeans," therefore, follows a logic outside of their own texts, reducing them to one single identity.

The lived religion approach response is to stress the complex and improvised nature of religious practice on the micro level, and the ever-changing mixture of beliefs, practices, social organization, and experience.[7] Concepts such as *superdiversity* – designating the increasing interplay of overlapping variables in, for example, ethnic minority groups – and *multiple religious belonging* – describing individuals' association with more than one religious tradition – have been coined to further theorize this unruly complexity in the modern world. Reflections on ancient religion have added the label *incerti* to unclassifiable individuals occupying the space between pagans and Christians, or have approached such middle ground by applying an anthropological lens to manifold local *appropriations* of a "great tradition."[8] This emphasis on individual diversity, occasional Manichaeanness, and local appropriations provides an important counterweight to late antique totalizing narratives and modern reconstructions that stress conflict between monolithic religious groups or accent the omnipresence of religious identity formation.[9] While religious conflict and identity formation play a role in the stories we tell about Late Antiquity, it should be supplemented with the more mundane reality of everyday life in which these featured less frequently.

Lahire's theoretical work on the shifting plural identities of individuals according to their situational needs has helped us observe the limited role a Manichaean identity played in interactions with neighbors, business associates, and legal actors. These observations can be compared with Éric Rebillard's research on late antique North-African Christians, showing that "religion and religious affiliation were neither the unique nor even the primary principles of action for Christians."[10] Future comparative research will have to build on these conclusions in order to highlight the social and religious factors that

7 McGuire, *Lived Religion*, 185.

8 M. Kahlos, "Incerti in Between: Moments of Transition and Dialogue in Christian Polemics in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries," *Parola del Passato* 59 (2004): 10; M. Kahlos, "Meddling in the Middle? Urban Celebrations, Ecclesiastical Leaders, and the Roman Emperor in Late Antiquity," In *Spaces in Late Antiquity: Cultural, Theological and Archaeological Perspectives*, ed. J. Day, R. Hakola, M. Kahlos and U. Tervahauta (London: Routledge, 2016), 11–31; Frankfurter, *Christianizing Egypt*.

9 Dijkstra, "Appropriation," 4 reminds us that the increasing interest in religious violence can in part be explained by the events of 9/11. The growing polarization within European and American societies, with the prominent othering of Muslims has also contributed to a renewed interest in processes of religious identity formation.

10 Rebillard, *Christians and their Many Identities*, 93.

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increase or decrease the salience of religious identities. The Everyday Groupness approach offers a variety of insights that can be developed to generalize beyond the tendency of diversification in lived religion research. Ann Swidler's distinction between *settled* and *unsettled* life is helpful to further understand different modes of engagement with religious repertoires in everyday life. During settled periods of life, individuals simply know from experience how to proceed.[11] Rather than deliberately choosing a course of action, employing elaborate religious ideologies, or consulting religious leaders, individuals follow the established cultural patterns that have served them well for a long time, occasionally infusing their practices with group-specific repertoire. The benefit of Swidler's *culture in action* framework is that it explains the intermittency of religious identities in late antiquity as part of the default rule, rather than the exception. Just like Swidler's modern American interlocutors, ancient Kellites did not offer coherent systems of meaning to limit the uncertainty of social interactions, but rather a "kaleidoscope of common sense" or "a swirling pattern of shifting justifications."[12] These *strategies of network diversification* included switching between modes of representation when a situation required alternative approaches. Manichaeans in Kellis employed a variety of identifications, and activated different dispositions, leading to multiple layered social interactions. The introductory formulas of their personal letters frequently included phrases and formulas with marked religious language, while the final greeting sections were often limited to a repertoire related to the social network of family and village. When the sections were combined to form a letter, they addressed the recipients (and bystanders) on multiple levels at the same time. As a result, most everyday letters succeeded in their aims because they kept multiple cultural meanings open, while the letters of the elect could potentially fail entirely if the recipients did not accept the religious framing "daughters of the holy church". Appealing to more than one frame of reference enabled the letter authors to make the most out of the situation.

Swidler distinguishes two modes of combining cultural repertoires and personal experiences: the *integrated mode* and the *segregated mode*, which surface in both *settled* and *unsettled* life. Even when individuals draw upon the same cultural repertoire, they respond to it differently; some fully integrate cultural repertoire into their understanding of personal experience, while others seem to keep the two apart. The integrated mode points to the way in which some individuals actively rework cultural repertoires into their understanding

11 Swidler, "Culture in Action," 281.
12 Swidler, *Talk of Love*, 182.

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of everyday life and personal experiences.[13] This requires extensive cultural and psychological work, of the type common in unsettled periods of life. The cultural and geographical circumstances of the Manichaeans in the Egyptian desert stimulated an integration of religion and everyday life, as they had to navigate the substantial cultural distance between the local situation and the expectations embedded in Manichaean ideology. The time and effort involved in this process means that it was primarily the elect who would have been able to develop a deeper integration between Manichaean repertoires and personal experiences. The strict Manichaean regulations they abided by made it imperative for them to reflect on their lifestyle and daily interactions with others. Some catechumens integrated Manichaean repertoire in their lives as well, especially if they participated in weekly confession rituals and traveled with the elect. The majority of situations, however, did not ask for explicit reflection. Most situations in the Kellis papyri convey the impression of a segregated mode in which Manichaean repertoire was highly appreciated, even though it was mostly used as "policy statements": abstract cultural formulas used as a substitute for personal experiences. Most situations could be navigated without the activation of a religious identity.[14] This flexibility has also been observed in Isabella Sandwell's study of John Chrysostom, Libanius, and their respective audiences. Chrysostom's audience seems to have disagreed with his all-encompassing ideals about the extent to which religion should permeate their lives. Instead, they regarded their religious affiliation as something that could be kept in a personal or family domain, separate even from the demands in other aspects of life.[15] Religious groupness was "something that had the minimum impact on how they lived their social lives and [they] would on different occasions position themselves within different forms of social organization *as it suited them*."[16] In Kellis, we also see religion segregated from everyday experiences, in spite of the religious leaders' calls to prioritize Manichaean behavior. With some exceptions – such as Piene's involvement with the Teacher – the Manichaeans of Kellis acted as inhabitants of an Egyptian-Roman village

13 Swidler, *Talk of Love*, 55–7.

14 Swidler, *Talk of Love*, 53–55. With regard to the situational salience of Manichaean repertoire, Teigen concludes that fluidity, variation, and appropriation does not exclude "a degree of continuity in the maintenance of group boundaries," arguing that the religious practices at Kellis "agree well" with reconstructions based on canonical Manichaean texts. Teigen, *The Manichaean Church in Kellis*, 293. I am skeptical, however, about his emphasis on the Manichaean church as an institution bringing about a "social world".

15 I. Sandwell, "John Chrysostom's Audiences and his Accusations of Religious Laxity," in *Religious Diversity in Late Antiquity*, ed. D.M. Gwynn and S. Bangert (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 540.

16 Sandwell, *Religious Identity in Late Antiquity*, 242.

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whose religious practices belonged to the mundane conditions of everyday life, to be navigated with a "practical sense," or a "feel for the game" – something which enabled them to recognize situations and anticipate successful responses within various social commitments and relationships.[17]

Within this segregated mode, the situatedness of individuals stirred the activation or deactivation of a religious identity. Theorizing about these situations includes not only looking at individual patterns, such as the correlation between time spent with the elect and the articulation of an explicit Manichaean stance, but also at patterns in emergent group styles. The conceptualization of Manichaeism as a type of utopian or secondary religion can be augmented by a discussion of the four group-styles discerned in the Kellis material: family religion, itinerancy networks, scribal networks, and a congregational group style. Most papyri attest to a *family religion group style*, in which the specific needs of the family members and household, such as fertility, health, and protection, took center stage. Due to this group style, Manichaeans in Kellis appropriated religious repertoires in amulets and horoscopes, and adapted Christian liturgical texts to a Manichaean context. Organization around households was combined with an *itinerancy group style*, in which Manichaeanness became tied to journeys with the elect. Scribal training occurred during such trips, but the *scribal network group style* stretched beyond the activities of the elect, and also included catechumens who copied amulets and Christian texts. Some of the Manichaean manuscripts copied at Kellis point to a *congregational group style*, in which Manichaeans gathered communally to sing, pray, and listen. Although such situations are most potent in their social and psychological impact, they may have had little significance in Kellis, where frequent gatherings cannot have been the norm. There is very little evidence that all Manichaeans in Kellis gathered regularly and developed fully integrated reflective Manichaean "selves." Instead, ordinary individuals engaged in Manichaean activities within overlapping social clusters of religious practice. *Manichaeism* is an assemblage of individual religious practices, varying repertoires available to practitioners, and the group styles developed over time.[18]

As observed, the ways Manichaeanness emerged in talking, choosing, performing, and consuming varied considerably. Apart from geographical variation

17 P. Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), 66.

18 Thinking about group-styles has the advantage of highlighting similarities with Christian intellectuals, itinerant ritual specialists with traditional Egyptian knowledge, mystagogues of Mithras, and Platonic philosophers. H. Marx-Wolf, *Spiritual Taxonomies and Ritual Authority: Platonists, Priests, and Gnostics in the Third Century C.E.* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016).

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between Manichaeans in the Oasis and the Nile valley, there was hierarchical variation between elect and catechumen, social variation between individuals, and temporal variation between the generations. Although not all papyri are dated, it is possible to detect diachronic differences within generational clusters in the personal letters. The earliest generation of Manichaeans, those under the patronage of Pausanias (in the 330s and 340s), had different experiences from those associated with Makarios and his children (in the 350s and 360s), and from those who had to abandon the village in a time of changing environmental and legal conditions (in the 370s and 380s). The relative prominence of Manichaean situations in Makarios's letters and the frequency of Manichaean self-designators in the letters of Psais, Pamour, and their associates, points to an open and flourishing – settled – situation around the turn of the second half of the century. The declining number of sources from the ensuing decades, along with the abandonment of the village, makes it harder to follow the transmission of Manichaean ideas and practices to the next generation.

Abandoning Kellis

What happened to the Manichaeans after they had to abandon Kellis? Did they move to Aphrodite and other towns in the Nile valley? There is, unfortunately, no trace of them in the papyri from the beginning of the fifth century, but we can be sure that they needed new structures and rhythms to adapt to novel social environments. Three plausible options emerge in light of the aforementioned theoretical suggestions, as well as legal developments at the end of the fourth century. Makarios's grandchildren may have disassociated themselves from Manichaeism, especially when it became more dangerous for them to perform Manichaeanness openly and adhere to Manichaean group norms. While Theodosian laws against Manichaeans and other ascetics may have had little direct impact on everyday life, they contributed to the increasingly clear demarcation between acceptable imperial Christianity and dissenting religious practices.[19] Alternatively, the younger generation of Manichaeans may have integrated their religion more fully into their everyday lifestyle, either by working more closely with the Manichaean elect, or by embracing a detailed social imaginary in which the cosmological narrative became connected to the situation on the ground. Manichaeanness may have been transformed from an intermittently salient identification belonging to a larger cluster of social

19 Kahlos, *Religious Dissent*, 27–39.

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identifications in the oasis, to a more well-defined, highly integrated, religious group style that came to define more aspects of daily life. One could even imagine that the compilation of the *Kephalaia* as found in the Medinet Madi collection stems from this end of the fourth-, beginning of the fifth-century development toward a more explicit conceptualization of the Manichaean group identity. The absence of a more thorough Egyptianization of the Coptic Manichaica makes this an implausible – albeit not impossible – scenario.[20]

A final option is a strategy that kept Christian bishops up at night: crypto-Manichaeism. Supposedly, some Manichaean ascetics concealed their religious affiliation to avoid persecution during the fifth century. They presented themselves as proper Christian ascetics living in cenobitic monasteries, while secretly devoting themselves to the teachings of Mani. Christian polemical reports about such concealment cannot be taken at face value, but should not be ignored either. If latter-day Manichaeans indeed employed this strategy, which would not be the first nor the last time it was used in the history of religious minority groups, it represents the zenith of unsettled life. It would have required constant vigilance to uphold both a Christian and a Manichaean repertoire even when crosscutting identities and dual expectations led to daily conflict and painful choices. The problematic plurality of investments in this scenario could not be solved in the same flexible way as the negotiation of roles and identifications in Kellis. It resulted in a fundamentally different group style.[21] Future studies will have to take up the complex relation between imagined threats in narratives of crypto-Manichaeism and real historical processes of secrecy and concealment.[22] The unsettled nature of intentional concealment stands in stark contrast to the intermittence of Manichaeanness in everyday life in Kellis. While crypto-Manichaeism needed an explicit, marked, and well-defined religious identity, the Kellis letters mostly convey an impression of settled life, with relatively few conflicts between group-specific religious dispositions and local commonsense. These Kellites were Kellites, even when they praised Mani and prostrated themselves facing the sun and the moon.

20 Compare the thorough integration of Christianity in Egypt with the limted Egyptianness of Coptic Manichaean texts. Durkin-Meisterernst, "Wie persisch war der Manichäismus in Ägypten?," 214–16.

21 Lahire, "Habitus," 353–4.

22 Matsangou, "Real and Imagined Manichaeans."

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APPENDIX 1

Outline of Published Documents from Kellis

The following list includes most published Kellis documents from the Dakhleh Oasis Project. They are listed with their abbreviations, a short designation of the content, the find location, and their material quality. The documents are sorted according to language groups rather than the year of publication. Ostraca published in the separate volume by Worp are not included in this list for reasons of comprehensibility and due to their limited connections to the material examined in the main text.[1] Papyri derived from Kellis outside of the official DOP-excavations[2] are also excluded, as are unpublished Kellis texts.[3] A full database can be found through Trismegistos Geo, which associates 621 texts with ancient Kellis (TM Geo 2753, accessed January 2021).

Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material
O.Kellis I Copt. 1	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 1	Ostracon
O.Kellis I Copt. 2	Jar stopper	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Ostracon
P.Kellis V Copt. 1	Manichaean psalms	House 3, room 6, levels 3 and 4	Single codex leaf

1 Worp, *Greek Ostraka from Kellis*.

2 There are several in the collection of the Universita Cattolica di Milano, acquired in 1968 (SB 16 12229 and 12754, 24 15903 and 15902?), see K.A. Worp, "'Ἐν συστάσει ἔχειν' = 'to Take Care Of'," *Tyche: Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte, Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 15 (2000): 189–90. Around the same time documents from the oasis were acquired by the university of Genova (P.Genova 1.20 and 21, republished in P.Genova 2 Appendix) and Duke University: SB XX 14293 published in J.F. Oates, "Sale of a Donkey," *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 25, no. 1–4 (1988): 129–35. P.Sijp 11a–11e published in J.F. Oates and P. Van Minnen, "Three Duke University Papyri from Kellis," in *Papyri in Memory of P.J. Sijpesteijn* (*P.Sijp.*), ed. A.J.B. Sirks, K.A. Worp, and R.S. Bagnall (New Haven: American Society of Papyrologists, 2007), 54–64. See also SB 26 16705–10.

3 Among these are the texts that are listed, but not edited, in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 306.

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Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material
P.Kellis V Copt. 2	Manichaean psalms	House 3, room 7, level 2 and room 7a, level 2, and room 8, level 1, and room 6 level 4	Larger and smaller fragments of papyrus codex
P.Kellis V Copt. 3	Manichaean devotional text (?)	House 3, room 11, level 2	Fragment of codex leaf
P.Kellis V Copt. 4	Faded, unknown	House 4, room 6, level 4	Codex leaf
P.Kellis V Copt. 5	Unknown (astrological text?)	House 3, room 6, level 2	Fragments from codex
P.Kellis V Copt. 6	Romans 2:6–29	House 3, room 6, level 4	Single leaf from codex
P.Kellis V Copt. 7	Sayings (?), amulet (?)	House 3, room 6, level 2	Fragments from rolled papyrus text
P.Kellis V Copt. 8	Manichaean (?) cosmological discourse (?)	House 2, room 5, level 3	Single papyrus leaf
P.Kellis V Copt. 9	Hebrews 12:4–13	House 3, room 6, level 4	Central strip of single papyrus codex leaf
P.Kellis V Copt. 10	Writing exercise with trace of Syriac	House 1, room 7, floor	Reused wooden board
P.Kellis V Copt. 11	Personal letter	House 2, room 7, deposit 3	Reused papyrus
P.Kellis V Copt. 12	Personal letter	House 2, room 2, deposit 2	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis V Copt. 13	Personal letter	House 2, room 3, deposit 5, 6 and room 4 deposit 3	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis V Copt. 14	Personal letter	North building, room 5, deposit 2	Papyrus fragments

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Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material
P.Kellis v Copt. 15	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis v Copt. 16	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis v Copt. 17	Personal letter	Unknown + House 3, room 11, deposit 2 and 5	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis v Copt. 18	Personal letter with business content	House 3, room 10, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis v Copt. 19	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Papyrus
P.Kellis v Copt. 20	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Papyrus
P.Kellis v Copt. 21	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis v Copt. 22	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis v Copt. 23	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Small papyrus fragment
P.Kellis v Copt. 24	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, various deposits and room 3, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis v Copt. 25	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3	Papyrus (with decoration for the address, in red ink?)
P.Kellis v Copt. 26	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis v Copt. 27	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3 and 4	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis v Copt. 28	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3 and 4	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis v Copt. 29	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3	Papyrus

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Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material
P.Kellis v Copt. 30	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 1	Papyrus
P.Kellis v Copt. 31	Letter	House 3, room 11, deposit 1 + room 9, deposit 3 and room 10 deposit 3	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis v Copt. 32	Personal letter	House 3, room 1b, deposit 2	Papyrus
P.Kellis v Copt. 33	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis v Copt. 34	Personal letter	House 3, courtyard,[a] deposit 3 and room 11, deposit 2	Papyrus
P.Kellis v Copt. 35	Personal letter and spell	House 3, room 6, deposit 3, 4, 5	Reused papyrus
P.Kellis v Copt. 36	Personal letter	House 3, room 1b, deposit 2	Papyrus
P.Kellis v Copt. 37	Personal letter	House 3, room 2, deposit 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis v Copt. 38	Personal letter	House 3, room 8, deposit 3	Reused papyrus
P.Kellis v Copt. 39	Personal letter	House 3, room 8, deposit 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis v Copt. 40	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis v Copt. 41	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Reused papyrus
P.Kellis v Copt. 42	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Wooden board (two parts)
P.Kellis v Copt. 43	Personal letter	House 3, room 8, deposit 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis v Copt. 44	Business account	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Papyrus

a Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 220 list it as “room 13a2.”

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Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material
P.Kellis V Copt. 45	Business account	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Reused wooden board
P.Kellis V Copt. 46	Business account	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Wooden board
P.Kellis V Copt. 47	Business account	House 3, room 3, deposit 3	Wooden board
P.Kellis V Copt. 48	Business account	House 3, room 6, deposit 3 and room 1a, deposit 1	Wooden board, on the back of P.Kell.Gr. 84 (Greek horoscope)
P.Kellis V Copt. 49	Memorandum	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Scrap of papyrus
P.Kellis V Copt. 50	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Papyrus
P.Kellis V Copt. 51	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 1	Fragment papyrus
P.Kellis V Copt. 52	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Fragment papyrus
P.Kellis VI Copt. 53	Mani's *Epistles*	House 3, principally in room 6[b]	80+ fragments from a single codex (eleven leaves)
P.Kellis VI Copt. 54	Mani's *Epistles* or instruction by other church leader	House 3, room 3, context 1 and 3	Fifteen fragments from a single papyrus codex leaf
P.Kellis VI Copt. 55	Manichaean psalm (?)	House 3, room 9, context 3	Small papyrus fragment
P.Kellis VI Copt. 56	Amulet against snake bite	Temple debris D/8 (mid 4th century domestic structure)	Miniature papyrus codex
P.Kellis VII Copt. 57	Personal letter	House 3, room 11, deposit 3	Wooden board
P.Kellis VII Copt. 58	Business letter	House 3, room 10, deposit 3	Papyrus

b Details in Gardner, *KLT2*, 14–15; Hope, "The Archaeological Context," 109.

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Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material
P.Kellis VII Copt. 59	Personal letter	House 3, room 8,	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 60	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis VII Copt. 61	Manichaean letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 2	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis VII Copt. 62	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 2	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis VII Copt. 63	Personal letter	House 3, room 7, deposit 1 and room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis VII Copt. 64	Personal letter	House 3, room 1, deposit 1	Reused papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 65	Personal letter	House 3, room 5, deposit 1, 3 and 4 and room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis VII Copt. 66	Personal letter	House 3, room 3, deposit 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 67	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 4	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 68	Personal letter	House 3, room 8, deposit 4	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 69	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 70	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3; room 3, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis VII Copt. 71	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Reused papyrus[c]
P.Kellis VII Copt. 72	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 5	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis VII Copt. 73	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus

c The verso contained traces of a Greek text with a "contract for the teaching of letters." Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 76.

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Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material
P.Kellis VII Copt. 74	Personal letter	House 3, room 9,	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 75	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 76	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 77	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposits 3 + 4	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis VII Copt. 78	Personal letter	House 3, room 11, deposits 3 + 4	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis VII Copt. 79	Personal letter	House 3, room 11, deposit 4	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 80	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 81	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 82	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposits 3 + 4	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis VII Copt. 83	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 1	Wooden board
P.Kellis VII Copt. 84	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 85	Personal letter	House 3, room 2, level 1	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 86	Personal letter	House 3, room 10, level 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 87	Personal letter	House 3, room 1, deposit 1	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 88	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 89	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3[d]	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 90	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposits 2 + 3 + 4	Papyrus fragments

d But see the notes in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 153.

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Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material
P.Kellis VII Copt. 91	Personal letter	House 3, room 9,	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 92	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 93	Personal letter	House 3, room 11, deposit 4	Parchment
P.Kellis VII Copt. 94	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3.	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 95	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 96	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis VII Copt. 97	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 98	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragment
P.Kellis VII Copt. 99	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 100	Personal letter?	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragment
P.Kellis VII Copt. 101	Personal letter?	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragment
P.Kellis VII Copt. 102	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 103	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 104	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 105	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis VII Copt. 106	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 107	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis VII Copt. 108	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments

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Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material
P.Kellis VII Copt. 109	Personal letter	House 3, room 3, deposit 3; room 6,	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis VII Copt. 110	Personal letter	House 3, room 8, deposits 3 + 4	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis VII Copt. 111	Personal letter	House 3, room 8, deposit 4	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 112	Personal letter	House 3, room 8, deposits 3 + 4	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis VII Copt. 113	Business letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 114	Business letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 115	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 116	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 117	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 5	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 118	Personal letter	House 3, room 4, floor	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 119	Personal letter	House 3, room 1, deposit 1	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis VII Copt. 120	Personal letter	House 3, room 11, deposit 2	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 121	Personal letter?	House 3, room 14, deposit 3	Papyrus fragment
P.Kellis VII Copt. 122	Personal letter	House 4, room 1B, deposit 2	Papyrus (folded)
P.Kellis VII Copt. 123	Personal letter	House 4, room 6, deposit 14	Papyrus
P.Kellis VII Copt. 124	Personal letter	House 4, room 6, deposit 14, room 4, deposits 1A and 6	Papyrus fragments

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Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material
P.Kellis VII Copt. 125	List	House 4, room 1B,	Wooden board (part
P.Kellis VII Copt. 126	Invocation (?)	House 4, room 1, deposit 1 and room 1B, deposit 1	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis VII Copt. 127	Personal letter?	D/8, room 1, deposits 2 + 5 and room 3, deposit 4	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis VII Copt. 128	Personal letter	D/8, room 7, deposit 2 and room 8, deposit 3 on 4	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis VII Copt. 129	Personal letter (Old Coptic)	Temple area, zone 20, (inner temenos) deposit 12 surface	Ostracon[e]
P.Kellis VII Copt. 130	Unclear	Temple area, Shrine I (the mammisi), room 1, deposit 6	Ostracon
P.Kellis VII Copt. 131	List?	D/8, room 8, deposit 3	Wooden board
P.Kellis I Gr. 1	Fragment of official document (293–294 CE?)	North building, room 1	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 2	Declaration on oath (301 CE)[f]	House 1, room 9	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 3	Document concerning irrigation	House 1, room 9 and House 3, room 1, level 1	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 4	Contract (331 CE)	House 2, room 2, level 2	Papyrus

e Gardner, "An Old Coptic Ostracon from Ismant el-Kharab?," 195–200. Interpretation challenged in Bagnall, "Linguistic Change and Religious Change," 11–19.

f By two people from Hibis, Kharga Oasis. It is unclear how this text ended up in House 2 in Kellis.

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Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material
P.Kellis I Gr. 5	Personal letter	House 2, room 7 understairs	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 6	Personal letter	House 2, room 5, level 3 and room 6 level 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 7	Personal letter	House 2, room 6, level 3 and level 5	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 8	Sale of a slave (362 CE)	House 2, room 5 (floor) and room 6 level 3	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 9	Private agreement	House 2, room 7	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 10	Order for payment	House 2, room 2	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 11	Order for payment	House 2, room 2	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 12	Fragments of personal letter	House 2, room 2 level 2 and North building, room 1	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 13	Division of property (335 CE)	House 2, room 2	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 14	Fragment of an agreement (356 CE)	House 2, room 7 and room 3	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 15	Declaration to Praeses Thebaidos (357 CE)	House 2, room 3, level 6 and room 5 level 3	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 16	Business note	House 2, room 2, level 2 and 5	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 17	End of a letter	North Building, room 2, level 2	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 18	Loan of money	North building, room 6, level 1	Papyrus

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Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material
P.Kellis I Gr. 19a	Petition to Praeses	House 3, room 8, level 4	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 19a appendix	Petition to Praeses Thebaidos	House 3, room 8, level 3 and 4	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 19b	Fragment of prefectural hypographe	House 3, room 8, level 3 and 4 (on the back of Gr. 19a appendix)	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 20	Petition to the praeses Thebaidos	House 3, room 8, level 4 and level 3	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 21	Petition to a former magistrate (321 CE)	House 3, room 8 level 3 and 4	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 22	Part of prefectural (?) Hypographe (324 CE)	House 3, room 9, level 3 and room 8, level 4	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 23	Petition to the Praeses Thebaidos (353 CE)	House 3, level 3	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 24	Declaration to office of the Dux (352 CE)	House 3, room 3, level 3 and room 9, level 4 and room 6 level 4	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 25	Official document (address)	House 3, room 10, level 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 26	Judicial report	House 3, room 6, level 3, 4, and room 11, level 4	Papyrus fragments

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Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material
P.Kellis I Gr. 27	Official document	House 3, room 6, level 4 and room 1a,	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 28	Administrative account	House 3, room 3, level 1 and room 9, level 3	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 29	Receipt transportation costs (331 CE)[g]	House 3, room 2, level 3 and room 6, level 4	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 30	Exchange of property rights (363 CE)	House 3, room 6, level 3 and room 9, level 3	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 31	Lease of a house (306 CE)	House 3, room 6, level 3 and room 8, level 4	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 32	Lease of a room (364 CE)	House 3, room 6, level 4	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 33	Lease of a room (369 CE)	House 3, room 10, level 3 and room 6, level 1	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 34	Sale of half of a foal (315 CE)	House 3, room 9, level 3 and room 8, level 4	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 34 appendix	Fragment of a copy of the same sale as Gr. 34?	Unclear	Papyrus fragment
P.Kellis I Gr. 35	Sale of a heifer	House 3, room 10, level 3	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 36	Contract of sale (308 CE)	House 3, room 10, level 10 and room 8, level 4	Papyrus fragments

g Revisited in R.S. Bagnall and K.A. Worp, "ΤΕΤΡΑΧΡΥΣΟΝ," *Tyche: Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte, Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 15 (2000): 3–6.

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Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material
P.Kellis I Gr. 37	Sale of part of a	House 3, room 10,	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 38a	Property gift (333 CE)	House 3, room 9, level 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 38b	Property gift (copy)	House 3, room 9, level 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 39	Sale of part of an orchard	House 3, room 1a, level 2	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 40	Loan? (306/7 CE)	House 3, room 9, level 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 41	Loan (310 CE)	House 3, room 8, level 4	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 42	Loan (364 CE)	House 3, room 3, level 3 and room 9, level 4	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 43	Loan with mortgage (374 or 387 CE?)	House 3, room 6, level 1 and room 5, level 3	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 44	Loan (382 CE)	House 3, room 6, level 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 45	Loan (386 CE)	House 3, room 6, level 3 and 4	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 46	Loan	House 3, room 6, level 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 47	Loan	House 3, room 6, level 4	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 48	Manumission of a female slave (355 CE)	House 3, room 9, level 3 and room 8, level 3 and 4	Papyrus fragments (folded extensively)
P.Kellis I Gr. 49	Loan (304 CE)	House 3, room 8, level 4	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 50	Receipt	House 3, room 8, level 4 and 3	Papyrus fragments (with faded Coptic letter on the back)[h]

h This is P.Kellis VII Copt. 112.

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Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material
P.Kellis I Gr. 51	Receipt transportation	House 3, room 6, level 2	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 52	Receipt transportation	House 3, room 6, level 1	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 53	List of expenses	House 3, room 10, level 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 54	List of expenses	House 3, room 9, level 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 55	List	House 3, room 8, level 4	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 56	Subscription of a document (324 CE)	House 3, room 11, level 1	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 57	Fragment of dated subscription (332 CE)	House 3, room 10, level 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 58	Fragment of an agreement (337 CE)	House 3, room 1, level 1	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 59	Consular date (328 CE)	House 3, room 6, level 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 60	List of names	House 3, room 7a, level 2	Wooden board (no holes)
P.Kellis I Gr. 61	List of money arrears	House 3, room 3, level 1	Wooden board
P.Kellis I Gr. 62	List of rent payments	House 3, room 8, level 4	Wooden board
P.Kellis I Gr. 63	Manichaean letter	House 3, room 6, level 4	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 64	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, level 4	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 65	Personal letter	House 3, room 8, level 4	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 66	Personal letter	House 3, room 8, level 4	Papyrus

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Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material
P.Kellis I Gr. 67	Personal letter[i]	House 3, room 10,	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 68	Personal letter	House 3, room 10, level 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 69	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, level 3	Papyrus (folded)
P.Kellis I Gr. 70	Business letter	House 3, room 6, level 3	Reused papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 71	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, level 3	Papyrus (folded)
P.Kellis I Gr. 72	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, level 4	Papyrus (folded)
P.Kellis I Gr. 73	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, level 4	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 74	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, level 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 75	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, level 4	Papyrus (rolled and tied up)
P.Kellis I Gr. 76	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, level 4	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 77	Fragment of a letter	House 3, room 7a, level 2 and room 6 level 3 and 4	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 78	Business letter	House 3, room 10, level 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 79	Business letter	House 3, room 6, level 4	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 80	Business letter	House 3, room 6, level 4	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 81	Business letter	House 3, room 11, level 4	Papyrus fragments

i Convincing new reading in Gardner, "P. Kellis I 67 Revisited," 223–28.

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Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material
P.Kellis I Gr. 82	Calendar of good and bad	House 3, room 1, level 1	Wooden board[j]
P.Kellis I Gr. 83	Calendar of good and bad days	House 3, room 11, level 4	Papyrus fragments
P.Kellis I Gr. 84	Greek Horoscope (373 CE)[k]	House 3, room 6, level 3 and room 1	Wooden board (three pieces) with Copt. 48 on the other side
P.Kellis I Gr. 85ab	Two magical formularies	House 3, room 11, level 4	Papyrus
P. Kellis inv. 92.35b	Fragmentary amulet for Pamour III[l]	House 3, room 11, level 4	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 86	Fever amulet	House 3, room 6, level 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 87	Fever amulet (copy of Gr. 85b?)[m]	House 3, room 11, level 3	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 88	Christian (?) amulet (or liturgical document?)[n]	House 3, room 8, level 4	Reused wooden board, part of notebook?
P.Kellis I Gr. 89	Medical prescription	House 3, room 8, level 4	Papyrus
P.Kellis I Gr. 90	School exercise: calculation	House 3, room 6, level 4	Wooden board

j The last page of a codex? Worp, *GPK1*, 206; Hoogendijk, "A Note on P.Kellis I 82." The last lines are now recognized as a record of the Manichaean daily prayers, and translated as "I bow down and praise with pure heart and [forthright speech (etc.)]." Gardner, "P.Kellis I 82," 91.

k Earlier publication in Worp and de Jong, "A Greek Horoscope," 235–40.

l Worp, *GPK1*, 218.

m Jordan, "Intrusions into the Text of the Amulet "P. Kellis G." I 87?," 34.

n Römer, Daniel, and Worp, "Das Gebet zur Handauflegung," 128–131.

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Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material
P.Kellis II Gr. 91	Greek Manichaean	Structure 3,[p] room 1, level 4	Complete papyrus bifolium
P.Kellis II Gr. 92	Manichaean hymn of praise	House 3, room 9, level 3	Complete papyrus bifolium[q]
P.Kellis II Gr. 93	Sethian (?) invocation or scripture (?)	House 3, room 1, level 1	Fragmentary part of papyrus codex leaf
P.Kellis II Gr. 94	Eulogy/amulet (?)[r]	House 3, room 4, level 3	Wooden boards[s]
P.Kellis III Gr. 95	The Isocrates codex, three orations[t]	House 2, room 9 (kitchen, SE corner) on top of KAB	Wooden codex of nine leaves
P.Kellis IV Gr. 96 (KAB)	The Kellis Agricultural Account Book	House 2, room 9 (kitchen, SE corner) with Isocrates codex[u]	Wooden codex of eight leaves

o Edition in the appendix of Jenkins, "Papyrus 1 from Kellis," 217–30.

p It is not entirely clear what this means. As the North-Building was originally called "structure 4," structure 3 may have designated the street nearby.

q In both cases is indicated by the editors that the document is "complete and self-contained," not deriving from a quire or a codex. Gardner, *KLT1*, 132, 37.

r Römer and Gonis, "Ein Lobgesang an den Vater der grosse," 299–300.

s Note how the use of the T numbers for wooden boards was no longer used after some time.

t Worp and Rijksbaron, *The Kellis Isocrates Codex*. Earlier publications on the KAB and Isocrates tablets mainly focusing on the codicology include J.L. Sharpe, "The Dakhleh Tablets and Some Codicological Considerations," in *Les tablettes à écrire de l'antiquité à l'époque moderne*, ed. E. Lalou (Turnhout: Brepols, 1992), 127–48; Sharpe, "Dakhleh Oasis Project: The Kellis Codices," 192–97.

u Detailed expose on the find location by Colin Hope in Bagnall, *KAB*, 5–16. The photos show a large jar next to the two codices.

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Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material
P.Kellis VI Gr. 97	Four texts, one with analogies with the *Acts of John*, another section of a Manichaean psalm[v]	House 1, the North building and House 3[w]	Papyrus fragments from one codex (?)
P.Kellis VI Gr. 98	The daily prayers (*Prayer of the Emanations*)[x]	House 3 (rear courtyard)[y]	Single wooden board
P.Kellis II Syr. 1	Syriac fragments[z]	House 3, room 8, level 1 and room 13, and room 1 level 1	Three fragments of papyrus
P.Kellis VI Syr. 2	Syriac fragments	Temple area, structure D/8, room 1, context 5	Single papyrus fragment
P.Kellis II Syr./Gr. 1	Syriac and Greek fragments	House 3, room 7, level 1	Fragments of a single codex leaf on parchment
T.Kellis II Copt. 1	Doctrinal text about the father (resembles *Keph.*)	House 3, room 11, level 4	Wooden board (reused)

v Earlier publication in I. Gardner and K.A. Worp, "Leaves from a Manichaean Codex," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 117 (1997): 139–55. A discussion of the context is found in Hope, "The Archaeological Context of the Discovery of Leaves from a Manichaean Codex," 156–61; Jenkins, "Papyrus 1 from Kellis," 197–230.

w Hope, "The Archaeological Context," 108.

x Earlier editions and discussions in Jenkins, "The Prayer of the Emanations," 243–63; Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 194–6; Khosroyev, "Zu einem manichäischen (?) Gebet." 203–22. Only later it was recognized as containing the daily Manichaean prayers. Gardner, "Manichaean Ritual Practice at Ancient Kellis," 245–62.

y Hope, Kaper, and Bowen, "Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab – 1992," 41 notes it derived from deposits against the north wall, presumably of the courtyard rather than the north wall of room.

z An updated edition of the Syriac text is printed in *CDT1*.

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Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material
T.Kellis II Copt. 2	Six (?) Manichaean psalms (only beginning of the line) and a commemoration hymn[aa]	House 3, room 4, level 3 (bound with T.Kell.Copt. 3)	Wooden codex with five folios, 1–3 and 5 are scrubbed clean
T.Kellis II Copt. 3	Traces	House 3, room 4, level 3 (with T.Kell. Copt. 2)	Wooden codex with seven folios (all deliberately cleaned)
T.Kellis II Copt. 4	Two Manichaean psalms	House 3, room 6, level 1	Wooden board
T.Kellis II Copt. 5	Manichaean psalm (?)	House 3, room 9, level 3	Small fragment of wooden board
T.Kellis II Copt. 6	Manichaean psalm	House 3, room 8, level 4	Wooden board
T.Kellis II Copt. 7	Manichaean psalms (with devotional postscript)	House 4, room 1b, level 2	Wooden board
T.Kellis II Syr./Copt. 1	Syriac–Coptic glossary	House 3, room 2, level 3	Part of a wooden board
T.Kellis II Syr./Copt. 2	Syriac–Coptic glossary	House 3, room 6, level 3	Fragments of a wooden board
SB 26 16826 and SB 26 16827[bb]	Horoscope	D/8, room 8, deposits 5 and 6	Fragments of a wooden board
SB 26 16828	Horoscope	D/8, room 4, deposit 2	Papyrus fragment
SB 26 16829	Horoscope	D/8, room 4, deposit 2	Papyrus fragments

aa Earlier published as Gardner, "A Manichaean Liturgical Codex," 30–59; Gardner, "Abbreviated Version," 129–38.

bb Worp and de Jong, "More Greek Horoscopes," 203–14.

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Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material
TM 749353[cc]	Greek letter of church	House 4, room 13, deposit 2	Papyrus
TM 699684 and 699685[dd]	Psalm 9.22–26 (LXX)	D/8, room 8, level 4, group on the left	Papyrus fragment
TM 700788[ee]	Page of Oracle Book (inv. P96.150)	D/8, room 7, context 7	Papyrus
TM 642081[ff]	Demosthenes's *De Corona* 82–83	Temple area, D/7 (close to the West Church)	Papyrus
SB 24 15919[gg]	Personal letter (late 3rd century)	Temple area, room 3, level 2 and north corridor, level 2	Wooden board
TM 60981[hh]	Fragment of Homer	Temple area, Shrine III, room 3b	Wooden board
TM 91945, 48–50[ii]	A parody on Homer & fraction tables (school exercise?)	Temple area, Shrine I, room 2	Four miniature leaves of a wooden codex and a miniature wooden codex with three leaves

cc Gardner and Worp, "A Most Remarkable Fourth Century Letter," 127–42.

dd Worp, "Psalm 9.22–26 in a 4th-Century Papyrus," 1–6.

ee F.A.J. Hoogendijk, "Page of an Oracle Book: Papyrus Kellis 96.150," in *Proceedings of the 27th International Congress of Papyrology*, ed. T. Derda, A. Lajtar, and J. Urbanik (Warsaw: The Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplements, 2016), 595–622.

ff K.A. Worp, "A New Demosthenes Fragment from Kellis," *Symbolae Osloenses* 89, no. 1 (2015): 148–55.

gg K.A. Worp, "A New Wooden Board from the Temple at Kellis," *Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete* 3 (1997): 1014–20.

hh With description of find location by Hope, Worp and Hope, "A New Fragment of Homer," 206–10.

ii With description of find location by Hope, Hope and Worp, "Miniature Codices from Kellis."

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Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material
P.Bingen 119a and b[jj]	Fourth century Greek business	House 4, room 13, level 2	Papyrus
P.Bingen 120	Fourth century Greek business account	House 4, room 1b, level 1	Papyrus
P.Bingen 116[kk]	Greek account	Temple area, gateway to second *temenos*	Clay tablet
TM 140729 and 140730[ll]	Census declarations (132, 146 CE)	C/2/5, context 4 (roof collapse)	Papyrus
TM 140731	Loan of money (138 CE)	C/2/5, context 4 (roof collapse)	Papyrus
TM 140732	Repayment of loan (145 CE)	C/2/5, context 4 (roof collapse)	Papyrus fragments
TM 140733	Repayment of loan	C/2/5, context 4 (roof collapse)	Papyrus fragment
TM 140734	Contract, rent/ sale of a house	C/2/5, context 4 (roof collapse)	Papyrus fragment
TM 140735	Tax receipt	C/2/5	Papyrus fragment
–[mm]	Mythological story of Kyknos son of Poseidon	West of Shrine II (Area D/3)	Ostracon

jj With description of find location by Hope, Bagnall and Worp, "Two 4th Century Accounts from Kellis," 495–509.

kk With description of find location by Hope, Worp and Hope, "A Greek Account on a Clay Tablet," 471–85. The excavation reports mention another clay tablet with a Greek account (?) found in the Roman Villa (Area B, 3/1/1). Of this new tablet is said it mentions "Psais the priest." Bowen et al., "Brief Report on the 2007 Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab," 27.

ll With description of find location by C.A. Hope, in Bagnall, Worp, and Hope, "Family Papers," 228–53.

mm K.A. Worp, "A Mythological Ostrakon from Kellis," in *Oasis Papers 3*, ed. G.E. Bowen and C.A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003), 379–82.

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Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material
–[nn]	Order from chief priest to	Main Temple D/1/75.13	Papyrus
–	Order from chief priest to komarch	Main Temple D/1/75.13	Papyrus
–	Order by Stonios	Main Temple D/1/75.25	Papyrus
–[oo]	Petition to prefect (289–300)	Main Temple D/1/84.19	Papyrus
–	Stonios (?) petition to prefect	Main Temple D/1/75.4	Papyrus
–	List of priests	Main Temple D/1/75.5	Papyrus
–	Petition	Main Temple D/1/75.16	Papyrus fragment
–	Hypographe (response to petition?)	Main Temple D/1/75.2	Papyrus
–	Account	Main Temple D/1/75.2	Papyrus
–	Report to *strategos* (?) about priests	Main Temple D/1/75.16	Papyrus
–	Regnal formula	Main Temple D/1/75.3	Papyrus
–	Regnal formula (5×)	Main Temple D/1/75.1, 19, 20, and from Shrine I (D/2/1 and D/1C/3)	Papyrus

nn The following twelve texts have been published in Worp, "Short Texts from the Main Temple," 333–49.

oo Published earlier in Kaper and Worp, "A Bronze Representing Tapsais of Kellis," 116.

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(*cont.*)

Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material
P.Gascou 67[pp]	Contract for irrigation work	House 4, room 4, level 2	Papyrus
P.Gascou 68	Account of wheat and barley	House 4, room 4, level 2	Papyrus (verso of P.Gascou 67)
P.Gascou 69	Petition (325–30 CE?)	D/8, room 7	Papyrus
P.Gascou 70	Receipt (304–24 CE?)	A/10, level 11	Papyrus
P.Gascou 71	Tax receipt (337 CE)	D/8, east corridor room 4, level 2	Papyrus
P.Gascou 72	Order for payment (340–5 CE)	D/8, room 1	Papyrus
P.Gascou 73	Receipt for rent	C/1, room 1, level 3b	Papyrus
P.Gascou 74	Receipt for rent	C/1, room 4, level 2b	Papyrus
P.Gascou 75	Fragment of receipt	C/1, room 4, level 3b	Papyrus
P.Gascou 76	Fragment dating (with reference to Britain)	D/8, room 8	Papyrus
P.Gascou 77	Dating formula (339 CE)	D/8, east corridor, room 4, level 2	Papyrus
P.Gascou 78	Dating formula (309 CE)	D/8, south corridor	Papyrus
P.Gascou 79	Fragment of administrative account	D/8, east corridor, room 4, level 2	Papyrus fragments

pp P. Gascou 67–88 are published in Worp, "Miscellaneous New Greek Papyri from Kellis," 435–83.

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(*cont.*)

Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material
P.Gascou 81	Fragment of personal letter	D/8, room 1	Papyrus
P.Gascou 82	Official correspondence	D/8, room 8	Papyrus (folded several times)
P.Gascou 83	Perfume recipe/medical prescription	House 4, room 1b, level 1	Bottom of a small wooden box
P.Gascou 84	Amulet	House 4, room 1b, level 2	Papyrus (folded)
P.Gascou 85	Amulet	House 2[qq]	Piece of wooden board
P.Gascou 86	Amulet	House 2, level 16	Papyrus fragment
P.Gascou 87	Amulet	D/8, east corridor, room 4, level 2	Papyrus fragment
P.Gascou 88	Enigmatic text (magical?)	A/10/63, level 11	Papyrus

qq P.Gascou 85 and 86 have inv. No. A/2/134 and A/2 level 16, both are without corresponding number(s) in the archaeological reports found in the editions of Coptic and Greek documents.

General Observations regarding the Find Locations

The majority of the documents listed in this table derive from individual find locations. Only in some exceptional cases are documents joined together from widely dispersed locations. An example of the latter are the fragments of P.Kellis VI Gr. 97: pieces of a codex leaf with a section of the *Acts of John* and a Manichaean psalm, which were found in House 1, House 3 and the North Building. According to the excavator, this indicates a multiphased disposal process over a period of time. The fragments in rooms 1 and 2 of the North Building must have been part of the primary deposit (the last coin in the deposit is from Constants II, 347–58 CE), and the wind may have taken fragments to room 6. The distribution of the fragments into room 1 of House 3 and under the animal manger in the courtyard of House 1 indicates the codex with the *Acts of John* and

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the Manichaean psalm(s) was disposed before the last generation of occupants left these houses.[4] They may have used the discarded material from the North Building while raising the floor levels of House 3 (room 1). Was the original codex cast away intentionally? Was it no longer useful for the liturgical practice of the owners? It is unfortunately impossible to answer these questions. It should, however, be noted that the KAB and the Isocrates codex were found in similar layers of rubbish in House 2, room 9 (which used to be the kitchen). The mud brick oven in this room was no longer in use, and a layer of animal droppings beneath the wooden boards suggests it was used as a stable for some time before the disposal of the wooden codices.

There are a few other examples of widespread dispersal of fragments from a single document.[5] In most of these instances, simple explanations like the wind may be the most probable, since several rooms were connected. The distribution of Mani's *Epistles* fragments is harder to explain; they were found all over House 3 (room 1, deposit 2; room 3, deposit 3, room 6, deposit 3 and 4; room 8, deposit 4; room 11, deposit 7).[6] At which point in time was this papyrus torn?

The large number of papyri fragments in House 3 – in particular in room 6 – is staggering. Over three thousand papyrus fragments have been found in this house alone, surrounded by domestic rubbish and an equally staggering number of ceramics.[7] The location of the papyri fragments and ceramics suggests that most of the papyrus letters were stored in vessels, as discussed in chapter 1. While we are still awaiting a final publication of the excavation, we can already see this pattern in House 3, rooms 8, 9, and 10.[8] According to the initial publications and reports, a number of papyri were found in close proximity to large jars, presumably water kegs.[9] The overview in Table 19 shows that the Petros letters were kept together, presumably with at least several of the letters from Pamour's family in the same jar. Some of the Orion letters were kept together in room 9 (with the exception of one fragment from room 10). Similarly, the majority of the letters associated with Makarios derived from room 6 in House 3 (with one exception found in room 3).[10]

4 Hope, "The Archaeological Context of the Discovery of Leaves from a Manichaean Codex," 160–1.

5 Worp, *GPK1*, 3–4.

6 According to Hope, "The Archaeological Context," 120. See Gardner, *KLT2*, 14–22 for a reconstruction.

7 C.A. Hope et al., "Dakhleh Oasis Project: Ismant el-Kharab 1991–92," *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* 19 (1989): 4.

8 Hope, "The Archaeological Context," 104.

9 Table distilled from Hope, "The Archaeological Context," 120–21.

10 Hope, "The Archaeological Context," 108 and table 4 on page 20.

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TABLE 19 Overview of some of the papyrus finds in House 3

Find locations	Deposit no.	Documents (abbreviated)	Main characters or authors
House 3, room 8, deposit 3	P61 & P65	G19b, 20, 21a, 31, 41, 49, 50, 65, 66, C43 & G20, 21a, 38b, 50, C38, 39	Pamour son of Psais (4×) and Philammon (3×), Pamour (?) (2×), Psais son of Pamour, Tehat, Petros (2×)
House 3, room 8, deposit 4	P63	G20, 21b, Mani's *Epistles*	
House 3, room 9, deposit 3	P51 & P52 & P56 & P57	C15, 16, 40 & G30, 38a, 38b & G30, 38b, C41& G71, C15	Orion, Petros (?), Psais son of Pamour (3×), Pamour & Psais
House 3, room 10, deposit 3	P17	G33, 37, C18	Pamour son of Psais, Takysis, Orion

Finds from House 2 show similar patterns (Table 20), although only the papyri in room 2 (deposit 2) were found in close proximity to ceramic jars.[11] One cluster of papyri is associated with Pausanias and Gena, while another cluster relates to Tithoes and his family. On the basis of this clustering, it can be concluded that these documents were stored together in a family archive in the rooms (or below the roof) where they were found, rather than disposed of randomly after the village was abandoned.

TABLE 20 Overview of some of the papyrus finds in House 2

Find locations	Documents (abbreviated)	Main characters
House 2, room 2, deposit 2 (roof collapse)	G4, 10, 11, 12,[a] C12	Pausanias, Tithoes
House 2, room 5, deposit 3	G6, 8	Pausanias, Tithoes
House 2, room 6, deposit 3 and 5	G6, 7, 8	Pausanias, Tithoes
House 2, room 7 (cupboard under stairs)	G5, 9	Pausanias, Tithoes

a But note that one other fragment of this letter was found in the North Building, room 1, north of levels 2 and 4.

11 Hope, "The Archaeological Context," 105.

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APPENDIX 2

Prosopography of Makarios's and Pamour's Relatives

This prosopography of a selection of the Kellis letters includes most of the relatives of Makarios and Pamour III, but focuses on those who are discussed in the main text. The creation of a fuller prosopography and an updated *onomasticum* remains paramount. The notes here should be read in the context of the prosopography in CDT1 and the reconstructed family trees in chapter 1. For most reconstructions, I am indebted to the editors of the Kellis papyri. I have only referred to their editions for the most controversial identifications, or where I deviate from their reconstruction. The abbreviations in this appendix are shortened, G = P.Kellis I Gr. + no., C = P.Kellis V and VII Copt. + no. The **bold** font indicates that a letter was (probably) written by the individual, while non-bolded font indicates other letters that only mention their name.

Andreas

C12 (?), C19, C25, C26, C36, C37, C59 (reconstructed) C65, C71, C73, C79, C84, C86, C88, C92 (?), C96, C105, C107 (?), C111, C115, G71, **P92.1**

Andreas is one of the most enigmatic figures in the corpus, as he is greeted by many but his exact relationship with his addressors is never entirely clear. Pamour greeted Partheni "and her children by name, especially my son Andreas" (C71). In C84, Theognostos writes the following to Psais III: "our son Andreas, if he is unoccupied, let him come to us." Pegosh greets him as "my son" (C73) and as "brother" (C79), while Pamour II describes him as Theognostos's son (G71). The passages place Andreas in in the generation after Theognostos and Pamour III, but it remains unclear whether he was a child of one of these people.[1] P92.1 is an unpublished fragment, written by Andreas to Psais.[2] C36 is a letter sent from Ouales to Psais and Andreas, which has led the editors to reconstruct Andreas and Ouales in the fragmentary C59.

Several other figures with the name Andreas feature in the Greek and Coptic letters. In C78, Andreas, son of Tone is greeted, and the Andreas greeted by Timotheos in C92

1 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 135 suggest that if Theognostos was the husband of Partheni, Andreas might have been their son. Cf. Teigen *The Manichaean Church in Kellis*, 65–67.

2 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 247.

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might have been a third individual. The village scribe in G45 is yet another individual. In C107, Andreas is addressed by a certain Dorotheos, but the letter lacks references to other familiar names.

Apa Lysimachos

C21, C24, C29, **C30**, C72, C82, **G67**
Lysimachos, who is often addressed with the honorary "Apa," was a close contact of Makarios and his sons. Lysimachos also had connections to Theognostos, Philammon, and others who traveled with him (see C72 postscript). He was one of the Manichaean elect.

Charis (Wife of Philammon II)

C19, C20, C24 (unnamed), C25, C26, C64, C66, C67, C70, **C76** (postscript), C102, C105 (?)
See notes at Philammon II. In C64, she is greeted by Maria (wife of Pamour III) as "mother Chares and her children." In C76, she adds a postscript to Pegosh's letter to Partheni, which has led some to suggest that she may have been Pegosh's wife.[3] In several letters she is referred to without her husband (maybe he passed away? See C70, C76, C102, C105).

Horos (Son of Maria and Pamour III)

G30, G72

Hor (Presumably More than One Individual)

Distinguishing between the various individuals called Hor (and variations of this name) is nearly impossible. Two identifications are of crucial importance: who is the Hor associated with Apa Lysimachos, and who are the author and recipient of C15–18? Decisions regarding these two questions influence the identifications in other letters.

3 The option is considered in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 99. But see also the reconstruction in which she is the wife of Philammon. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 23, 38–9.

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Hor I

Apa Lysimachos is closely associated with Hor, as he is included in the postscript in C72 and addressed by Apa Lysimachos in C30. Both of these letters mention a "brother Psais," whom I identify with Psais III. Psais III, Pamour III and Pegosh greet Hor in their letters (C70, C76, G72), and so did Philammon II (C80, C81, C82) and Theognostos (C84, see also C111). If we take these passages to be referring to the same individual, he may have been a very central figure. G72 mentions a Horos, presumably the son of Pegosh or Pamour III.

Hor II

"father Horos" is addressed by Pegosh in C78–79. Since he is a senior figure, he is probably not to be identified with the recipient of C30 and C80–82.[4] It is unclear whether "father Hor" in C43, C94 is the same individual.

Hor III

It is difficult to see whether the Hor associated with Ploutogenes (presumably from the same generation as Psais III and Andreas, see G75, C89) is the same as one of the previous figures. A logical identification would be Hor I, as he was closely associated with Pamour III and his brothers. This would be acceptable for the Hor in G75, C89, C36, C105, but less acceptable in C115, where Hor and Piene are children (presumably from the generation after Psais III). If we combine this with the notes on Ploutogenes III and Hor, it seems most logical to discern yet another Hor (now designated as Hor IV) in C36 (reconstructed) and C115. The sub deacon Hor in C124 is yet another individual.

The question remains, who is addressed by Orion in C15–17? The recipient of these letters was familiar with Manichaean terminology and was a contemporary of Tehat (C18, C43, C50, C58?). Cross-referencing prosopographical information suggests a date in the 350s, slightly earlier than Hor I, but there is not enough evidence to identify the recipient of C15–17 with the "father Hor" of C78 and C79.

Jemnoute (Daughter of Maria and Pamour III)

C19 (once?), C25, C26, C44 (?), G30 (unnamed), C64 (unnamed), C65, C71, C72 (?), G71
She is probably to be identified with the J(e)mnoute of C25 and C44. In G71, Pamour III greets "mother Maria and the little Tsempnouthes" and requests that the "girl" to be sent, probably as a maid, and in C64 Pamour III and Maria repeat this request. The use of this adjective dovetails with Pamour's "little Tsempnouthes" in G71.[5] In C65 and

4 *Contra* Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 106.
5 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 46.

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C71, Maria greets her (unnamed) mother with "my daughter Jemnoute," but in light of Pamour's greeting in G71 it seems reasonable to identify the older Maria, wife of Makarios, with the mother of Maria, wife of Pamour III.[6] In this reconstruction, Maria (Makarios's wife) is the mother of Maria (Pamour's wife), and Jemnoute stays with her grandmother while Pamour and his wife work in Aphrodite. It is, however, difficult to reconcile this reconstruction with Pamour's promise to pay for her travel and present wool for a cloak as "her hire" (G71).

The Jnpnoute in the list of people traveling with Apa L. (C72) and the Jemnoute in the economic account (C44) are distinct individuals, but contemporary to Jmnoute. Makarios also greets two Tshemnoute's in C19, but only refers to one as "my daughter."

Kapiton (Son of Kapiton)

C65, C70, C72, C75, C76, C77, C81, C92, C86, C108, **C109**, C116, **G45**, G71, G76
Kapiton son of Kapiton (patronym in G45) was married to Tagoshe, the sister of Psais III, Pegosh and Pamour III. As such he was often addressed by the brothers (C65, C72, C77),[7] and he is referred to in business and travel arrangements (C81, C82, C86, C108, C116). In one of Pegosh's letters (C75), Kapiton adds his own greetings to Tagoshe. G76 shows that Kapiton became estranged from his wife, and Pegosh writes that he no longer knows if Kapiton is alive.[8] Kapiton is presumably the author of a letter to his wife (C109 spelling her name as Tegsogis (?)). The Kapiton in G45, who borrowed money from someone in the hamlet of Thio (386 CE), may be his son, because Pegosh reports that his former brother-in-law moved to the Nile valley.[9]

Kyria (Wife of Psemnoute)

C12 (?), C19, C20, C21, C22, C25, C44, C66 (unnamed), C68, C82
Kyria has been associated with Psemnoute and they are addressed at least three times with Maria (C20, C21, C22). Since Matthaios addresses them as "father Psemnoute and mother Kyria" (C25), they were probably married and belonged to the generation of Makarios and his wife Maria. Kyria could have been Maria's sister.[10] The alternative

6 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 52. If so, it is remarkable to see no connection to Makarios, who did greet his daughter Tsempnouthes at least once.
7 On the double greeting, see Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 103.
8 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 100–1.
9 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 100.
10 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 29.

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spelling Goure/Gouria (C20 and C19) may indicate that Mother Goure/Gouria in C68 and C82 is the same woman, maybe addressed after the death of her husband.[11] In this latter letter, Philammon II greets "my mother Gouria and my sister and her husband and her daughter." If Gouria is indeed Kyria, the wife of Pshempnoute, and if she is the sister of Maria, we can connect both the Kyria-Pshempnoute couple and Philammon to the Makarios archive.[12] There is, however, no definitive evidence to identify Philammon as the biological son of Kyria.

Maria (Wife of Makarios, Mother of Matthaios and Piene)

C19, C20, C21, C22, C24, C25, C26, C29, C70, C76, G71
Maria is addressed by both her sons and her husband. Pamour III, Pegosh, and their wives greeted her as "mother Maria" (C70, C76), which probably indicates her position in the generation older than them.

Maria (Wife of Pamour III)

C25, C26, G71, C64, C65, C66, C71, C77
Maria adds her postscript to a number of letters by Pamour III, most of which are probably sent from Aphrodite. In C25.57 Maria (Makarios's wife) asks about the name of Maria's (Pamour's wife) (newborn?) daughter. In C26.46 Matthaios discusses this Maria in a letter to his mother.

Makarios

C19, **C20**, **C21**, **C22**, **C24**, C25 (postulated)
Makarios is the father of Matthaios and Piene, husband of Maria. His letters often address Maria, Kyria, and Pshemnoute. He is to be distinguished from the Makarios in C43, G10, G46.

11 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 131. Although the Gouria (daughter of.... (unnamed)) in C19.73 is not necessarily the same as the Gouria in C19.74 and/or C19.82 (Makarios calls her "my mother Gouria").

12 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 118.

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Matthaios (and Variant Spellings, Son of Makarios)

C19, C20, C21, **C25**, **C26**, **C27**

Pamour I

G4(?), G19b, **G20**, **G21**, G30, G31, G33, G38ab, G41, G42, G44, G50, G66 (?), G76,
G19b is a prefectoral hypographe in Pamour son of Psais and Philammon's petition. G20 and G21 (from the first decades of the fourth century) are petitions by Pamour son of Psais. G30, G33, G38ab, G42, G44, G50, G76 is patronym only.

Pamour II

G42
Pamour II is the uncle of Pamour III. He was Psais II's brother, as he identifies himself in a loan document (G42) as the son of Pamour I and Takose/Tekysis.

Pamour III (Son of Psais, Grandson of Pamour)

C22 (?), C24, C25, C26, **C64, C65, C66, C67, C68, C69, C70, C71, C72**, C77, C80, C82, G24, G33, **G71**, G72, G73(?)
Pamour III is the son of Psais II and the brother of Pegosh/Pekysis (greeted as brother in C24, C25, mentioned together in C80). Presumably, they had a third brother, Psais III, with whom they corresponded regularly. Pamour III traveled with Philammon II (C82), Pegosh (C77), and maybe also with Matthaios (C26) for business purposes. In G24, Pamour son of Psais is included in a legal petition. G24 mentions a Pebos son of Pamour, which might indicate that Pamour III had another son.[13]

Partheni (Wife of Pegosh)

C19 (?), C25, C47, C64, C70, C71, C75, C76, C83, C102, G76 (unnamed)
Partheni is the wife of Pegosh. She is addressed twice in his letters (C75, C76) as "my lady Parthene." She is also greeted several times by the other brothers (C70 by Pamour III or Pegosh, C64 and C71 by Pamour III, C102 by Psais III). C19, C25 and C47

13 On the dating of this text, see Worp, *GPK1*, 114.

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may refer to the same person, although the texts are generally considered to be earlier and refer to a "mother Partheni," which may point to an elderly lady. The Partheni in C19 is, moreover, located in the hamlet Thio. C25 mentions a son of Partheni. The use of short names is also confusing, as Partheni might have been addressed as Heni in several letters (C76, C83).[14] If that is a correct understanding of the shortened name, one might wonder whether the Heni in other letters also refers to this Partheni (C26, C33, C38, C44, C45). A strong connection exists between C83 (Theognostos mentioning "father Pollon" and "sister" Heni) and C45 (with the same names).[15]

Pegosh (Brother of Pamour III)

C24, C25, C26, C65, C66, C67, C68, C69, C70 (?), **C73, C74, C75, C75, C76, C77, C78, C79,** C80, C82, C108, C109, C120 (?) **G44,** G68, G71, **G72, G76**
Pegosh/Pekysis is the son of Psais, and grandson of Pamour (C75 address). He is Pamour III's brother. They are often addressed together (C24, C25, C80) and correspond regularly with each other. They belong to Matthaios's generation (who greets them as brothers). Pegosh lived in Antinoopolis (G71), and wrote to his brother about the liturgical duties of his son (G72). In G76, he offers a surety for his former brother-in-law Kapiton's tax debt. G44 details a loan of money from April 382 CE, which dates Pegosh's activities into the 380s. The letters C73–C79 are mostly addressed to Psais III (C73, C74) and Partheni (C75, C76). The latter seems to have been his wife (see notes at Partheni, in C25 a son is mentioned as well). C70 was either written by Pamour III or Pegosh.[16] C120 was a letter to Pamour written by a "Pekos," who, despite the variant spelling, may be the same person.[17]

Piene (Son of Makarios)

C20, C21, C24, C25 (postulated), **C29**

14 On the use of these truncated names see Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 39, 60, 71. Reference is made to Bagnall and Ruffini, *Amheida I. Ostraka from Trimithis, Volume 1*, 60.

15 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 25. I consider the weaver in C44 someone else and do not recognize Partheni in C38. The (H)eni in C26 and C33 may connect Partheni stronger to the Makarios family, but I am not convinced she is in fact the same person.

16 See notes on the address at Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 69–70.

17 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 84.

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Philammon I

G19b, G49, G65
There seems to have been another Philammon in the older generation, as he addresses Tekose, the mother of Pamour II (G65).[18] In G19b he is associated with Pamour I. G49 also dates back to the early years of the fourth century.

Philammon II (Husband of Charis)

C19, C24, C25, C64, C65, C66, C73, C77
Philammon II is probably the husband of Charis, as they are greeted together several times (C19, C25). Since Makarios greets them as "brother" and "sister," and Matthaios and Gena opt for the more formal "father" and "mother," Philammon II and Charis belong to the generation of Makarios.

Philammon III

C78, C79, **C80**, **C81**, **C82**, C88 (?), C89 (?), C108, C114 (?), C122 (?), G64 (?), G71, G72, G79
In G71, Philammon is mentioned by Pamour III, but without a family-designator. C78 and C79, written by Pegosh to father Horos, also contain a reference to Philammon, but no family-designator is used in these letters either.[19] G79 reveals Philammon was a *dromedarius*, which is often associated with the military, but might have been used here as an indication of his occupation. The existence of other individuals with the same name cannot be ruled out, since we know at least one other Philammon who came from Tjkoou (C20). An identification with Lammon (C24, C65, C72, C77, C78) has been suggested, but is not likely because this person is addressed as "my son" by Pegosh and Pamour (C77, C72). Lammon is, however, distinguished from Philammon in C24. C122 derives from House 4, which makes it less likely that it refers to Philammon III.

Ploutogenes (Presumably More than One Individual)

C36, C61 (?) C80, **C85 C86**, **C87**, **C88**, **C89**, C90, C91 (?), C94 (?), C105 (?), C106 (?), C115 (?), C118 (?), G58?, G75

18 Worp, *GPK1*, 37.
19 Worp, *GPK1*, 171.

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Ploutogenes (and variant spellings) appears to be a central figure in the Kellis papyri, but he is difficult to place in terms of kinship relations. He belonged to the generation of Pamour III and his brothers, since he corresponded with Psais III and Andreas (C36 (?), C85, C86, C88). Two potential identifications are of importance. The first is the identification of the Ploutogenes of C85–C89 with the recipient of the Teacher's letter (C61 addressing a Ploutogenios). The second is the usage of the short name Piena or Iena for Ploutogenes in C90, which leads us to wonder whether the Piena/Iena in other letters is to be identified with Ploutogenes, author of C85–89. The latter question is made more difficult by the appearance of a Hor and Iena, who are greeted several times (C91, C118, C36, C115, C105). C106 has been associated with C85 and C86 on the basis of the handwriting.[20] In light of these questions, I distinguish between the following individuals:

Ploutogenes I

Called "father Iena" in C90 and C105. This man probably belonged to Psais II's generation. An identification with the Ploutogenes in G58 would pin the date to the year 337 CE.

Ploutogenes II

Author of C85–C89, who used the abbreviated name Piena (C88, C89).[21] This individual was in the same generation as Psais III, Andreas, and others. His greeting to Plotogenes and Hor (C89) indicates the presence of another figure with the same name.[22]

Ploutogenes III

On the same generational level as Ploutogenes II (greeted in C89.19 as "brother") or in the generation below Psais III and Andreas (since in C36 and C115 they are addressed as "little brothers" or as "the children"). Could C91 have been addressed to this Ploutogenes III/Iena and Hor (cf. C105)? In G75, Psais III, Ploutogenes, and Hor are greeted as if they belong to the same generation. Could there have been a Hor in Ploutogenes II's generation?

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20 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 143.

21 In C88 Ploutogenes/Piena greets Kepitou (?) = Kapiton, Philammon and Mother Lo. Which leads me to identify this Ploutogenes with the author of C85–86. Many unfamiliar names feature in C89.

22 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 143, 153–5.

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Psais I

Psais I does not appear in the Kellis corpus except as a patronym.

Psais II (Son of Pamour)

C25, C64, C65, C66, C70, C71, C72, C73 (unnamed), C77 (?), C82, C105, C108, **C110,** G30, **G32,** G38ab, G44, G50, G75 (?), G76.

Psais II lived for a long time and served as *paterfamilias* for the extended family. As such, he is addressed by his sons, their wives, and others as "father Pshai/Psais." In G75 he may be greeted as "my most esteemed brother Psais the great." Pegosh's reference to "father Shai" in C77 could also refer to someone else. C110 is presumably written by father Psais II to his sons Pamour III and Pegosh.[23] G32 is a lease contract (from 364 CE). G38ab (333 CE) is a grant for a plot of land. In G30 (363 CE) Psais II represents his son Pamour III and grandson Horos in a case about land ownership in Aphrodite. G33, G44, G76 mention only a patronym.

Psais III (Brother of Pamour III)

C19 (?), C30, C35, C36, C37, C57 (?), C59 (?), C62 (?), C64, C65, C67, C70, C71, C72, C73, C77, C78, C79, C80, C84, C109 (?), C111 (?), G67, G71, G72, G75 (?).

Although Psais III is not as explicitly connected to the family as his two brothers, he is frequently addressed as "brother" by Pamour III and Pegosh. Since Psais is a common name in the oasis, it is difficult to distinguish him from his father, Psais II, and other individuals.[24] The identification in C35–37 is built on the presence of Andreas. The Psais in C19, C30, C109, and C111 could have been another person. C112 and G50 are probably associated with Psais Tryphanes.[25]

Psemnoute

C12, C20, C21, C22, C25, C26, C33 (?), C66, G70 (?)

Psemnoute was the husband of Kyria, and a close associate of Makarios. His name in C33 occurs without the presence of other familiar names. In G70, another (?)

23 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 221–4.

24 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 77 expresses doubt, but also distinguishes the Pshai of C64, G71 and C72 from father Psais II.

25 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 111, 230–1.

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Psempnoutes is addressed by Timotheos the carpenter. Other individuals with the same name are mentioned in G23, G24, G74, KAB 575, 1155.

Tagoshe (Wife of Kapiton, Sister of Pamour III)

C64, C67, C75, C78, C83 (?), C96, C109 (?), **C115**, C120, C116? G76 (unnamed)
Tagoshe is greeted several times by Pamour and Pegosh (C64, C67, C78, C120). In C83 Theognostos mentions a "mother Tagoshe."[26] She was the wife of Kapiton, but G76 indicates that he left her. She is presumably the author of C115, which addresses Psais III. The children greeted in this letter could have been her children (especially Maria, who is addressed as "my daughter," but this is less certain for Hor and Piena).

Takose (Wife of Pamour I)

G30, **G37**, G42, G65
Takose/Tekysis is the wife of Pamour I and mother of Psais II and Pamour II, who included a matronym in some of their documents (G42 Pamour II, G30 Psais II). In G37 (from 320 CE), Aurelia Takysis sells a part of her house. G65 is a letter from Philammon I to "my sister Tekose."

Tappollos (Mother Lo, Wife of Psais II)

C45, C48, C64, C65, C70 (?), C88, C103, C108, G44, G87
Mother Lo is greeted several times by relatives of Pamour III (C64 by Pamour III, C66 by Maria, C108 by Psais III, C70 by Pamour or Pegosh). The Lo in C70 could be another person since she is addressed as "sister Lo." An amulet (G87) is made for "Lo." In G44, Pegosh refers to his father and grandfather, and a grandmother named Tapollos. Could Tapollos be the same as the elderly "mother Lo"? The strongest supporting argument for this identification is the fact that Maria begins C64 by greeting the elderly ladies before moving on to more practical items.[27]

26 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 180 distinguishes between the Tagoshe/Tekysis in C96 and the wife of Pamour I.

27 Worp, *GPK1*, 54 is carefully suggesting she may be identified with Tapollos. Cf. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 40, 46, 196, 214.

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Theognostos

C65, C71, C72, C73, C80, C81, C82, **C83**, **C84**, G67, G71
Theognostos is strongly associated with Philammon III, Pamour III and Pegosh. He is the recipient of a letter from Apa Lysimachos (G67). He is frequently addressed by the brothers (C80, C81, C82 to him alone, C65 and C72). How exactly Theognostos was related to Andreas, Hor, and Partheni is not clear. He could have been Partheni's brother, and therefore, the brother-in-law of Pamour III, Psais III, and Pegosh. See also the notes on Andreas.[28]

The Teacher

C20, C24, C25, C29, **C61**
The Teacher is presumably a high-ranking Manichaean elect, working and traveling in Alexandria and the Nile valley. He is often mentioned by Makarios and his sons, one of which travels with the Teacher. The author of C61 self-identifies as "the Teacher" according to the anonymous style of Mani's *Epistles*, but this may have been another individual (his predecessor or successor?).

Unnamed (Son of Maria and Pamour III)

Postulated from G30

28 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 135, 142.

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